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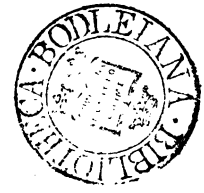

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PREFACE.

It may be readily supposed that those who honour the following narrative by a perusal will conclude that the incidents related are fictitious. To guard against such misapprehension I beg explicitly to state that, with the exception of one event in the action of the story, it is founded upon actual facts, and is narrated as closely to the reality as circumstances would admit of. What that event is, in which I have departed from the true current of the story, the reader will easily perceive; though, in this particular,

it will not be found wholly destitute of a precedent to draw from. The plan adopted to introduce the characters and their deeds to the public was deemed the best to illustrate the case; and, if at times, some digression has been resorted to, it is hoped that the base intrigue and despicable pervertion of truth that were employed in the matter will stand out more obviously to the mind of the reader.

The chief enactors of the intrigue are all drawn from the life, and were personally known to the Author; and it is not in this instance only has he been a spectator of Jesuitical craft applied to the distortion of truth and circumstances, that the primary object of the Order—proselytism—may be accomplished.

At no period since the Reformation have the Catholic ecclesiastics, regular and secular, laboured with greater diligence to attain

once more an ascendancy in these realms; and certainly at no period have those labours been attended with a like success. Yet, after many years of observation (though unconnected with the sect), I am perfectly convinced that the extraordinary extent of recession to the Roman Church has not been accomplished by conviction in the mind of its converts. Conviction, if any of my readers will take the trouble to analyze cases of conversion as I have done, will be found to be the last thing resorted to, if, indeed, it is ever attempted. Dependence upon the word of a man, artifice in deluding the understanding, and design in playing upon the prejudices of the intended proselyte, are the measures most familiar to the Roman ecclesiastics. Leaving aside Anglicanism, the study of antiquity in the remains of mediæval times goes far to captivate the senses and mislead the mind of an individual en-

thusiastic in his temperament, until he confounds the beautiful handiwork of our forefathers with the religion of the dark ages—a religion which stands the champion of ignorance and debasement. Men, whose minds must be impervious to common sense, are led away by the beauty of *symbolism*, until lost in a maze of symbolical lore; they actually define God, his worship, and his commandments, in the convolution of a triangle upon an aisle bench, in the essence of a bedaubed candlestick, the antiquity of an oaken screen, or the spray of a window. What can be expected of such men but that they will embrace so mystical a religion as the Roman Catholic by way of consummation?

But not in this alone, but in deeper concerns do the perverters seek to compass, by wily means, the conversion of a "heretic." In the pages of this little work some of them

are developed; and it is hoped that the exposure of such to the public may open the eyes of others to the detection of similar practices in their own case, and I hope in time to repel the intriguer. "Ab uno disce omnes."

THE AUTHOR.

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THE PERVERTER IN HIGH LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

A BENEDICTINE EN COUCHANT—DIVINE INTERPOSITION.

On a hot, dusty afternoon in Pall Mall, when the season was in the zenith of its brilliancy, our narrative commences. Cockspur street, Pall Mall, and Waterloo place were teeming with the equipages of aristocracy, and the dusty, glaring omnibuses of the million. Cabriolets jousted their puny pages till their diminutive legs seemed ready to spring them into mid air: ambling cobs lathered their chesnut forehands under the weight of dignity which bestrode them, and seemed perfectly conscious of the immaculate aristocracy which guided the bit: grooms in spotless buckskin and

buff hung near the doors of the club-houses, or chatted over mutual grievances to some fellow hostler at the corner. Jaded and greasy-faced pedestrians strode along the pavement, some hurrying, others sauntering and gazing at the carriage folk, all looking damp, and as though they wished themselves under the water-cart that deluged the crossings in mud. Ladies in heavy silks and with fiery colored parasols, which made one feel tropical to look at: young guardsmen in *mufti*, done up from tobacco and iced pale ale, measuring sleepy paces towards the Opera colonnade: bankers' clerks, whose faces resembled red cabbage after a shower, darted across the streets, despite carriages, omnibuses, and horses, and cast longing eyes into the club-house windows, and at the lucky old fellows who could sit in cool delight, and easy chairs, to sped through the much-coveted 'Times,' ever associated in their minds with a broiling city cook shop, disgusting mutton, and half-a-pint of porter.

Amidst the blaze of sunshine and luxury in this fashionable locality, Verrey's shop is an oasis of refreshing shade—a refuge from heat and dust, in which the weary pilgrim from the government office, or the drowsy victim of independence and ennui, may resign themselves to the somniferous

straw of sherry-cobbler, or moralize over the 'Debats' and an iced cream.

On the afternoon of which we write, an individual, in many respects different to the usual *habitues* of Verrey's, sat at one of the marble tables tasting his strawberry ice, munching a hard biscuit, and sipping a glass of iced water; while his eyes were running over the pages of 'Punch,' and his large mouth giving token of the amusement derived from the occupation. He was a man contrasting strongly with the lazy indolence or noisy vanity around him. A face deeply furrowed with lines, features large if not sensual, shaggy eyebrows, from under which peered two small grey eyes, that assumed when he smiled the merriest expression; a high forehead, destitute of all benevolence; white hair brushed up straight; and gray whiskers cut *à la militaire*, made up a face vulgar in its lineaments, yet polished and gentlemanly in its various expressions. His dress was uniform black, made without the least regard to his shape; the waistcoat without a collar, displaying a very neat linen shirt with a frill, and a collar grasped by a mohair stock, of such extended dimensions as to entirely envelope the lower portion of his face. He wore shoes and

silk stockings; and, with a heavy watch chain and seals, made, in the *tout ensemble*, the appearance of a well-to-do gentleman, who set the ruling fashion in dress wholly at defiance, or was so reliant upon *his style*, as to be independent of the conventional auxiliaries to establish his character as a gentleman. This was the Reverend Benedict Copinstall, a Roman Catholic priest, and member of the confraternity of Benedictines; a person whose merits had been acknowledged in public audience by the Holy Father, and whose influence had been the best exerted of any to reclaim the higher orders from the heresy of the Protestant church. And, indeed, our worthy brother Benedict had done well for the faith he professed in augmenting its adherents, and still better in bringing England in closer proximity with the Holy See.

That quiet gentleman, as he sits breaking his biscuit and chuckling over a paragraph in 'Punch' which lampoons himself, is possessed of an ambition that would satiate a red republican, and with the ready applicability of expedients that would gain the good opinion of a Dr. Cumming. His career has been a successful one; many proselytes from the higher orders rank with titled surnames

upon his card-rack; many thousands has he acquired for building, in the mediæval style, the churches of catholicity. But no arrogance, no display, no exaltation of self is to be seen in the affable and polite cleric; he still remains the same, still retains his unassuming position at the dinner tables of the nobility, and still is looked upon by the fair as a worthy old soul who has got the scandal of the town at his finger's end. Be it properly understood by the reader, that the Rev. Benedict Copinstall's mission is not inspired for the people. Democracy and Copinstall are antipathetical properties; but for the higher orders, among the titled, the wealthy, and the known to fame or defame, here exists the field of his mission: not to haunt the abodes of vice, degradation, and poverty, the hospital, the gaol, or workhouse, which are intended only for the mechanical portion of the priesthood; but to make the round of his morning calls; to know the exact disposition of certain beneficently inclined men of wealth; the weak points of ladies who are the guiding star in the world of fashion; the qualities and temperaments of their daughters; the vices and *penchants* of their sons; to be *au fait* with court, and the petty rivalries, cliques and vanities which crowd in the

avenues of court circles; the topic most pleasing to his host at his dinner table; the foible of the ambitious hostess, to pamper and flatter that; and to say piquant compliments to young ladies, who appreciate it the more because it comes from a man who sees so much of life and fashionable coteries; to make humorous enquiries of fast young men relative to certain rumours which every young man of *ton* glories in having floating around his name; and to submit to certain questionably witty sallies with good grace and an approving smile:—this is the portion of the Lord's vineyard our Rev. Benedict Copinstall cultivates; and a more scientific planter of the seeds of catholicity is not to be found; success attends him and his reward will come, for that he bides his time and so must the reader.

Mr. Copinstall having finished his ice, and arrived at the printer's name on the last page of the *brochure*,—to the palpable gratification of a sturdy looking character who had been repeatedly requesting the *garçon* for the same while eyeing our cleric with contemptuous glances,—addressed the waiter in French, paid his demand, and stepped once more into the clattering street. He had not reached the corner, turning into Waterloo place,

ere his attention was attracted to an open carriage that was dashing down the descent in gallant style. The occupant was a lady of striking beauty, sitting erect and displaying her elegant figure, while her eyes, shaded by the parasol, looked straight towards her horses' heads; as though the admiring looks given to the carriage by the passers-by where wholly unworthy of her attention, indeed highly disagreeable to her sensitive vanity. The carriage had nearly reached the corner when the near hind wheel shot away from its axletree on to the pavement. Mr. Copinstall saw the danger, shouted to the coachman, and, rushing up to the carriage, caught the fair one in his arms, just as the carriage had fallen with a jerk that capsized the driver and footman, brilliant liveries, and powdered wigs, in the dust below. So opportune had been his attendance that the lady escaped unhurt, though a little discomposed and somewhat incensed.

"I am much indebted, sir, for your timely assistance," she said, relieving herself of the reverend gentleman's support. Then, turning round to her discomfited menials, she exclaimed with some asperity, "How came you to have the carriage in this unsafe condition, Belton? I might

have been dashed to pieces but for this gentleman's assistance; I shall certainly recommend papa to find a more careful coachman."

"May it please your ladyship," replied the coachman, endeavouring to arrange his disordered wig and hat, and evidently confused from the effect of his recent concussion, "it is just as how I expected, and as how I told his lordship, that them patent axles was too flimsy for a baby chay, let alone the rate your ladyship is always pleased to drive; and if your ladyship is no way hurt the Lord be praised."—

"Get the carriage home, sir, I cannot stand talking in this crowd, I suppose I must have a cab."

At this moment a carriage drove up and stopped to enquire if any one was hurt. Mr. Copinstall knew the owner, and, offering his arm to the discomfited lady, said—

"Mrs. Bellington's carriage is here, allow me to assist you to it, she will be most happy to drive you home."

"You are very kind, thank you," was the reply. "I must beg you to call upon papa, we shall be most happy to thank you for your providential assistance; that is my card; do not forget to call."

A word from Mr. Copinstall secured for his charge a most cordial reception in Mrs. Bellington's carriage, which immediately drove off from the crowd which had congregated in a minute. The vehicle was soon temporally adjusted, and Mr. Copinstall walked leisurely away. Upon glancing at the card, previously to placing it in his pocket-book, a smile of pleasure played upon his countenance; and with a more elevated form and lighter step he proceeded westward, not displeased with the little incident which had increased the number of his aristocratic acquaintances.

CHAPTER II.

THE PROVINCIAL OF JESUITS—CONFIDENTIAL TETE-A-TETE.—A DOUBLE CONSPIRACY.

In a well furnished library, in one of the largest houses in Manchester square, sat a middle aged man of some rotundity of face and figure, but whose countenance bore the marks of constant mental application. With pen in hand and a quantity of letters, manuscript rolls, and books spread before him, his head resting on the back of a capacious easy chair, his eye wandering over the well filled book-shelves, conning upon some theme which evidently perplexed him, the Rev. Mr. Dilworth paused in solemn conference with his mind:—"Just, exactly so," he mutterred to himself, "precisely what they intend; and so a man may labour and strive, from one year to another, and the thanks he receives at the end is—'You

don't do enough, you must make greater progress; the field is open, materials ample, we must send a more active man if you don't succeed better; the Benedictines are beating us hollow, we are losing ground, our tenure can never be substantially fixed upon English soil, unless you can obtain strong friends in the government. You must have Catholic members of Parliament, you must convert the higher orders, undermine the nobility, encourage the Anglicans, touch their faith through their admiration of the arts. England will be Catholic —must be Catholic—her time is come; the Lord has heard the prayers of his faithful, the Holy Mother has granted their supplications.' Yes, just so; but does the General believe me omnipotent? Ah! send another. Let him come. Let them send me to China, it is an easier and more thankful place than that of Provincial to the Society of Jesuits in London." The Provincial of Jesuits was yet murmuring his discontent, *sotto voce*, when a footman announced "the Rev. Benedict Copinstall."

"Well, Dilworth!" exclaimed that gentleman upon entering, "what may your seclusion indicate —prayer? Not knocking up to the good old cause? Seen the 'Times' to-day? Ah! ah! at us again.

The old weathercock is on the wrong scent though! Capital, is it not?"

"Pray be seated," replied the Provincial, pointing to a chair in a quiet indolent manner.

"What is the reason you have not been out lately? I have not seen you this age. Any new move on the board—eh? or is business heavy?"

"My reports; and I have been down to Stonyhurst."

"Ah, indeed! And how are they in the old place?"

"Well, quite well."

"Seen that paragraph in the 'Herald.' Who put it in?"

"I did."

"Hump! only a flam I suppose?"

"Partially so; though it has had the proper effect. Sir Dudley came over as soon as he read it."

"But has his uncle really gone over in Rome?"

"No, but he went to see the Holy Father; and Palazzi says, the old simpleton was prodigiously flattered by the attentions shown him."

"And Sir Dudley is fairly booked."

"Quite. Pesented me with a cheque of £500 for —— street."

"That sounds well. You'r an amazingly lucky man, Dilworth. What says the General?"

"Abuse, as usual, and says England should be the marine residence of the Pontiff by this time, and Guildford prime minister."

"God bless me," exclaimed the Benedictine, drawing his pent-house brow completely over his small orbs in order to look displeased. "After the exertions you have made they should be content. The number of conversions that have been obtained within this twelvemonth will double and treble those for the past fifty years, and more than treble those will occur ere another twelvemonth. Let Harry stick to us, and he will make amends for all the evil that old debauchee, his namesake, did three centuries ago."

"I believe you're right, Copinstall; but there is a certain class of men in our society, who are for ever rushing into extremes, and the present General is one of those. They can't see from what quarter the storm follows them; so long as they can see clear weather ahead they never think of halting, but the storm comes and overtakes them, as it did in Spain, France, and even Rome. Violent measures can never be effected without some difficulty; but here we gain an advantage, and then pursue for another, instead of making

fast that which we have already got. No precautions are used to secure our power firmly, none to check the liberty of an insolent press, and keep the education of the people exclusively in the hands of the priests. Without this, Copinstall, you may labor and I may labor, and every common priest in England may do his little, but our victories, our conquests, are nothing—quite unsubstantial; without these two qualifications catholicity can never be established in England, and such headlong success is certain to result in the expulsion of the Jesuits, if not indeed that of the entire priesthood."

Mr. Copinstall, upon the mention of the Jesuits' expulsion, gave the Provincial one of his merry little looks, as though it were a consummation he earnestly desired, yet only ventured playfully to express. The Provincial only half caught the meaning and said—

"And I can assure you, upon the word of an experienced man, without the Jesuits you can do nothing. I am no egotist, but you depend entirely for your position upon us."

"Not myself. I suppose you mean the religion," observed the Benedictine, who could not at all agree to the last proposition, as far as he was concerned.

"Just so, just so."

"Oh! to be sure. Yes, yes, we all know that. But apart from this, have you got any particular work in hand; anything extraordinary delicate in its treatment?"

"No; none particularly. There are the Ossultones and the Baldwins. One of the last, a fine girl, is going to be a nun. She left me just as you came in."

"What is her fortune?"

"Fifteen thousand and the reversion of her mother's property, which, bye the by, I had some hard work to get the old lady to make over to her daughter; she talked about the younger children, and her daughter's fortune being enough for the convent. However it is all right now, I take her to the castle next week."

"Humph. Well if you have your hands empty I should like you to assist me in rather a bold stroke; yet a practicable one, I believe, thrown into my hands this afternoon by our Blessed Lady. It was quite miraculous, I can assure you."

"Ah! how so? Those little coincidences are well to know; they have such a capital effect upon a wavering convert, when told in a religious light, and the evident bearings of the Almighty properly revealed."

Mr. Copinstall related the incident of the carriage accident just as it occurred.

"And who could she have been. Something considerably beyond our grasp I expect."

"Not at all: only the eldest daughter of the most noble the Marquis of Rochdale."

"Rochdale!" exclaimed the Jesuit in undisguised surprise, if not horror. "God bless me, Copinstall, are you mad? Why we should have the entire court guide upon us for a twelvemonth were we to tamper in that quarter."

"Nonsense, Dilworth," replied the other, "you don't see the case as I do, for all you are a Jesuit. Do you know young Chorley of the Life Guards?"

"Certainly I do, and a most excellent young man he is; a promising bud, to bloom some day, I hope, in holy orders."

"Well, *she* has a *penchant* for Chorley; perhaps a trifle more. Do you comprehend me now?"

The Jesuit looked intently into the eyes of his visitor, as though to read in the interior of their shallow recesses the scheme which was traversing the brain. The Jesuit was too acute in tracing the designs of others to require a more lucid illustration, and he merely remarked,—"Perfectly; but it's a bold game, Copinstall."

"The greater the glory to God if we succeed."

"Aye, but we must be very cautious. To kill two birds at a time, one for the church the other for the cloister, that is working for the faith in gallant style."

"And a hundred thousand pounds for her dowry," hinted Copinstall.

"Oh fully that, man; her old aunt left her an excess of that amount I know."

"Glorious!" exclaimed the Benedictine, "until we meet again *mum*."

"As the vault of the Vatican," said the Jesuit, rising as his friend rose.

"Adieu."

"Adieu," replied the Provincial, ringing the bell, "if we succeed I shall be General and you, what?—Pope?"

"Cardinal Archbishop of Canterbury." And they both laughed heartily their parting adieus.

CHAPTER III.

THE FUTURE PERVERT—THE FASHIONABLE SISTERS —THE REWARD—A BENEDICTINE MAKING AN IMPRESSION.

A FEW days subsequent to the interview of the Provincial with his friend Mr. Copinstall, a lull had arisen of an hour's duration in the carriage knocks at the massive door of the Marquis of Rochdale's residence. The obese gentleman,—whose avocation in life was to sit six months in the year in a huge leather chair in the hall, alternately snoring and gloaming with his blood-shot eyes through the slits on either side of the doorway, giving entrance to visitors of *ton* with a sweeping pomposity, and snubbing pedestrians of equivocal garb and gentility with a tone of voice something between surprise at the audacity of the man to give a double knock at the door, and astonishment at the presumption of his supposing the Marquis

would recognize him in any other light than an obtrusive bore,—slumbered soundly. Such partial guardians of aristocratic exclusiveness may make excellent Cerberuses to deter the suppliant of charity, or the petitioner of well established claims becoming importunate; but to those whose obligations compel them to wait upon a great man, either in rank or wealth, is there anything so disgraceful as the fact that he cannot do so without strangling this three-headed monster by a bribe, or else submit to be worried by the most impertinent questions and the most ignominious observations? We have often wondered why it is that noblemen allow their menials to arrogate to themselves an insolent pride they themselves would blush to be told of. It is as though the arrogance of feudalism yet dwelt in the town mansions of the Norman descendants, and, for want of a better home, always lodged in a black leather chair, studded with brass nails, where it growled savagely through the mouth of a fat porter, forced to swill everlasting black jacks to prevent its choking him outright.

In the drawing-room of that splendid mansion sat Lady Charlotte Ongar and her younger sister, Lady Flora, while the Marquis, a man advanced

in life, paced up and down, chatting to his daughters, and felicitating in his heart that he was enabled to take this exercise so soon after the retirement of his hereditary enemy the gout.

Lady Charlotte, as we have before observed, was extremely beautiful; her features statuesque, and her large blue eyes, and faultless brow, bearing the impress of her birth. The moulding of her figure corresponded to the rigid harmony of her face, and the easy grace which rested in every limb, and marked her every movement, proclaimed her one of those queenly daughters of English nobility, that are the pride of their country and the admiration of Europe. There was a pensive look, tinged with conscious dignity, that characterized the settled expression of her lovely countenance, which at times softened into a smile of affable and acknowledged pleasure; at another, bore the trait of a determined, resolute spirit, inflexible in its purposes, and relentless in the prosecution of its convictions. A wavering, treacherous thoughtfulness hung over her eyes, as she raised them from the work upon which she was engaged to look upon the speaker, as though she habitually believed the true purport of speech was to be read in the countenance, not accredited

by the ears. Once or twice in the course of the conversation she had spoken to her sister in a tone not altogether affectionate, half reproving, half evincing a desire to correct mistaken conceptions; and to her father, though the tone was scrupulously respectful, she had differed from him without reservation, as though respect was his, and his words at all times demanding attention; but the sentiments they expressed, not by any means such as she could coincide with or accept. Her manner of speaking was impressive, her words simple and devoid of ornate language, or that which is somewhat too common now-a-days, and may be termed polite slang; yet there was sound sense in her views of the subjects spoken of, discrimination and impartiality in her ideas on general topics, breadth of judgment and penetration in those usually clouded with conventional interpretations.

Lady Charlotte had lost her mother early in life, but not so young as to become the pupil of some female relative, who, dazzled with the brilliant career opening for her foster charge, would have planted in a rich soil the meagre seeds of aristocratic ambition, and grafted upon a promising tree the sickly flower of ordinary fashionable life—a varied and gaudy tulip, attractive and splendid

in the expansion of its sky-tinted leaves, but destitute of fragrance; blown and blighted by one cold wind, and dead in its shrivelled beauty, without leaving a seed to resuscitate, in the future, its once resplendent colours. She had naturally a mind capable of self-direction, as it was of self-control; and her father, a man possessed of no striking intellectual endowments, acceded to her wishes, because he believed her more easily guided by indulgence than by constraining her feelings into the beaten path of nobility's aspirations. Perhaps he lacked qualities sufficiently commanding to influence the development of his daughter's disposition. The Lady Charlotte had grown into womanhood a self-reliant creature; and, amid the society into which her rank disposed her, she was not long in discovering her own superiority to the dissipated *insouciance* to all worthy and useful motives which characterized the majority, a very large majority, of her associates.

In Lady Flora we have a type of one of those young and beautiful girls who form the nucleus of the belles of high and fashionable life; whose existence is intertwined with gaity, and apart from which they are mute statues of inactive sorrow, doleful lamenters for the genial sun of

pleasure-seeking days. To them conventional dictation is as the spirit of the Koran, and fashion a lawgiver more potent than Moses. Tastes, occupations, pleasures, and religion, are ruled by an unseen and unknown hand; a thing having unrestricted power, but possessing no individuality—no defined limits; a matter devoid of substantiality but omnipotent in its arguments, against whose slightest whisper the boldest daughter among its votaries trembles. It is called the world; not the planet, but *the world.* It has countless forms. To us it is a dowager lady, masculine and austere, high aquiline nose, pointed chin, severe eyes, and a sharp sarcastic speech; she is loaded in expensive velvets, in the shawls of Cashmere, and the jewels of Storr and Mortimer; she rides in handsome chariots, has a superior box at the opera, condemns a new book, and it is neglected by all, praises a singer, and her voice is unsurpassed, disparages an individual, and he is universally shunned. This is the world we see when the name is uttered; and it was this world, though, perhaps, different in the garb of its idealty, which Lady Flora Ongar believed—worshipped. Her heart and soul placed their happiness in the life the world led, and beyond the

height of its pleasures her ambition never soared. To her the season was the harvest of life's enjoyment; *not* the season, the winter stored with the good things that season had brought forth—the period to gloat over the coming of the sunny days again. If Lady Flora ever thought at all of the future, it was of pleasures yet to come; if of change, the time when she should have an establishment of her own, give *fêtes*, go to *routes*, have re-unions, and receive a "select circle" in her country château. She had beauty, she had rank and wealth. A garden in which the butterfly sported over the flowers from which youth alone could extract the nectar, and she loved that world for the joys she received: her heart was absorbed in its pleasures, interested in its actions; she made it a paradise of many idols, and, like wiser heads than her own, proclaimed their praises because their fascinations held her charmed. So do we all think that pleasure must be greatest which rules paramount our own ambition.

"Well," said his lordship after a short pause in the conversation, and one or two turns up and down the room with his hands resting in his coat pockets, "it's an untoward affair, Charlotte, and I hope he will be satisfied by having his services

amply acknowledged. Can you suggest any other method of impressing him with our gratitude?"

"Give him the vacant rectorship at Crowle, papa; I am sure he will do better than that incipid sneak—the curate," exclaimed Lady Flora, without taking her eyes from the crotchet.

"You stupid child, Flora," replied Lady Charlotte, darting a reproving glance at her sister, "have we not been discussing from the first his being a Catholic priest?"

"And if we have, sister, is that any reason why he should not accept papa's offer? At all events he can but refuse it and then we have behaved handsome."

"Would the Viscount Lenham accept a cardinal's hat?"

"No," retorted Flora, blushing to the eyes, "not sooner than Colonel Chorley would accept half-pay, or a dowdy for his wife."

"Baby!" said the Marquis, patting his youngest daughter on the neck, "your sister Charlotte, my dear, knows better than yourself. You said a foolish thing."

"And why, my lord," replied the ruffled beauty,

taking her father's hand and throwing up her large hazel eyes into his face enquiringly.

"Because men do not change their religion upon the first eligible chance of obtaining employment in another."

"Well, papa, but men *do* change their religion, you know, and very often take employment in another church. The Rev. Mr. Anglicus, whom people talked so much of till really I was sick of his name, went over to the Church of Rome; and the bishop told my friend at dinner, yesterday, he was going to be made a Catholic bishop of Huntingdon."

"But Anglicus did not go over, Flora, for the purpose of being made a bishop as you would have. Mr. Copinstall turn a Protestant that he may accept the rectorship!" said Lady Charlotte, in her quiet manner.

"Oh, Charlotte!" exclaimed Flora, opening her large eyes still wider and pressing her father's hand, "do you mean to say that when a man is made a bishop, a few months after his *conversion*, he has no motive beyond mere opinion in turning? Why, I have heard and read of the greatest statesmen changing their minds a little, when they are

likely to get into office by so doing. Am I not right, my lord?"

"Such singular convictions do occur at odd times, my dear," replied the marquis, with a peculiarly hard smile, resuming his walk with longer paces.

"Well, then," said Flora triumphantly, "I certainly think the rectorship should be offered to this good gentleman, who saved my cross sister there from being maimed for life."

"I am not cross, Flora, my love, but you say such thoughtless things at times that it makes you appear ridiculous."

At this juncture the door opened, and the footman announced "the Rev. Benedict Copinstall;" who being, of course, somewhere about the second step on the staircase gave the ladies ample time to dispose their netting behind a cushion, and the Marquis to face about and plant himself opposite the fire-place.

The reverend gentleman in due time made his appearance; his small eyes twinkling such a fund of good nature, and his large mouth so expressive of kind purposes, that the Marquis at once stepped forward and thanked him for the timely aid afforded to his daughter. The easy, free, and self-

possessed manner with which he greeted the ladies and explained the accident, stamped him in the eyes of his listeners at once as a man used to the first society, and whose conversation would pass muster before a court clique; nor during his visit did the reverend Benedict fail to put forth his best powers to ingratiate the good-will of the affable Marquis. In the course of conversation it was discovered that Mr. Copinstall had met the Marquis in Italy, and that it was through the interest of the Benedictine that a noble relative of Lord Rochdale's had been enabled to become possessed of some rare works of art. A mutual understanding speedily sprang up. Mr. Copinstall was enabled to give the Marquis information relative to some Italian nobleman with whom he had been familiar when in Italy; indeed it would seem, every individual in whom his lordship felt interested was perfectly well-known to the Benedictine, and he related many amusing anecdotes concerning them. So pleasant had the time passed that all felt sorry when the announcement of another name compelled the priest to make his *congé*, which he did with so much grace as to win a cordial smile from each of the ladies. As he turned to leave the room he encountered

Colonel Chorley, who recognized him with a friendly familiarity.

"Ah, most excellent sir," he exclaimed, "have I caught you cavaliering in my absence. But, my lord, I believe it to be a fact wherever nobility and beauty reside, there is to be seen this worthy friar paying homage to the shrine."

"No, no, my lord; I pray you not to heed the Colonel, he is a dreadful maligner of the priesthood; he puts us all down as a parcel of idolaters."

"A true bill, Mr. Copinstall, I am afraid," said the Marquis, not heeding the clerical blushes, "or how do you excuse the fact of having a certain beautiful young lady in your arms yesterday afternoon?"

"Oh! oh!" cried all; and a merry peal of laughter went forth at the Benedictine's expense, whose eyes became like two glow-worms from beneath a bed of heather, and the muscles of his large face were convulsed with mirth.

"How is this, Copinstall," demanded Chorley, "I insist upon an explanation, or I'll report you to the Pope."

"I'll tell you, Colonel," said Flora, "it was my divine sister, Lady Charlotte Ongar."

"What!" exclaimed the Colonel, looking serious for the moment.

"Oh! I would not stop to face such a desperate warrior for a princedom," exclaimed the reverend gentleman. "Remember you cannot call me out, my cloth is the reverse of your own."

With this the excellent and agreeable Mr. Copinstall bowed his exit.

"That is the best tempered and most sensible man for a clergyman I have ever encountered, be he Protestant or Catholic," said the Marquis, as the door closed upon his visitor.

"Really he seems very well informed, and quite familiar with the world," added Lady Flora.

"A most superior man, and quite above the semi-hypocrites, semi-rakes, of young clergymen whom one constantly meets," joined in Lady Charlotte. "I had not the least idea I had won such a delightful beau."

"He is one of the most talented and accomplished men in his church, I know for a fact," said the Colonel, "and, at the same time, a most excellent Christian."

"He looks it, Colonel; but I suppose you accompany us to dinner at Devonshire House. Come

girls, away to your maids, you have not half-an-hour."

"Impossible, papa," exclaimed Flora. "Oh! that stupid man to stay so long, we shall certainly be dreadfully late."

"I would rather listen to Mr. Copinstall's conversation than attend the brightest dinner of the season," remarked Charlotte, sweeping her stately form towards the door.

"My lovely sister," said Flora, tripping after her, and encircling her waist, "you will certainly be a nun, if you do not better appreciate the exquisite pleasure of a ball at Devonshire House."

"And my society into the bargain, eh, Flora?" interposed the Colonel.

"They will make a priest of you, Colonel, to be wedded to Mother Church," replied Flora laughingly. "I have heard of you talking Puseyism or some such stuff."

CHAPTER IV.

STRANGE ARENA FOR PERVERSION—SELECTING THE INSTRUMENT—THE JESUIT A DISSEMBLER—RETREAT FROM CULPABILITY—THE CATHOLIC NOBILITY—PICTURE OF THE MADONNA—PERVERSION IN THE ARMY—EFFECT TO THE CAUSE—THE PROVINCIAL'S SLEIGHT OF HAND.

PICCADILLY was the arena of a busy confusion on that evening of the ducal ball. An incessant cavalcade of carriages rattled over the rough granite stones and lined the sides of the street, while from the adjoining regions of aristocracy more carriages teemed towards the thronged entrance, to swell the congress of equipages and madden policemen to despair that confusion and collision might not ensue. Splendid bays struggling on their haunches, and clashing showers of sparks from their hoofs; high stepping greys whirled round the corners, and dashed towards the entrance with the precision of a locomotive. Here the handsome pannels emblazoned with the arms of twenty descents, portly coach-

men, double footmen, cocked hats and long canes, were brought to a stop from the obscure brougham of some obscure man, struggling into fame and fortune, that might one day set his foot upon the neck of the twentieth descendent: mean cabs locked their paintless wheels in the French polished staves of lordly chariots; and facetious "cabbies" slanged in proper style the porter-guzzling flunkies of Belgravia. Pedestrians gaping, crushing and crowding to see they knew not what, lined the curb-stone, and assigned the equipages, as they flew past, to noblemen that never owned them. Then came a shout—"the Duke! the Duke!" and a *feu de joie* of cheers rang from side to side: and lo! a fat old alderman is seen by the next lamp light, shaking his "hill of flesh" with laughter at their mobish error: again the mighty cry, "the Queen! the Queen!" and a rush ensues; a yell of delight swells into the welkin, and men and boys, women and small urchins, tear along the pavement, waving hats, and shouting as though their lungs were made of malleable steel. The tide of cheers seems to bound for miles away: they are right this time, and they know it; there is no mistake in the bow of that nodding plume at the carriage window; and the shouts linger in the

distance long after the royal suite has gained its destination. The multitude gradually disperse towards their quiet homes, contented with their share of the fête, or lounge about the crowd of empty carriages, and wonder at the blowsey calves of stiff necked "Johns," cased in silk and dangling over the rich hammercloth on either side the bloated charioteers of modern days. What pompous sprouts of the *haut ton!* how gracefully they lean in cork screw fashion, cajoling brother members of powder and cane, press the white cravat *a la milorde*, and wager pots of "*haaf and haaf.*" Verily aristocracy looses nought in our days of its ancient dignity in the eyes of the million, through the lack of assumption on the part of its vassals.

The princely saloons of Devonshire House were brilliant in their illuminations and gorgeous in the throngs of rank and wealth, beauty and talent, which dispersed itself over them, and formed in small clusters of converse, or else swept through the mazes of the dance. Bright eyes, and brighter looks, beamed over the countenance of the young; affability and courteous refinement thawed the frigid statesman, and relaxed the muscles of the laurelled soldier. Old men with silver hair flirted with lovely girls of nineteen; the peer paraded

with the daughter of a city broker; and the majestic dowager, connected by successful marriages in countless ties of relationship to high nobility, chatted gaily with a plebian *millionaire*. Harmony dwelt in the air, pleasure and delight absorbed every expression; but amid the many pleased and pleasing countenances, how many schemes of ambition, love or revenge, jealousy, envy, and sorrow, rankled and corroded at the heart!

Among the many handsome women who commanded a small retinue of their order, Lady Charlotte Ongar was conspicuous. Gay without being frivolous, fascinating without familiarity, witty without sarcasm, she had old and young, soldier and civilian, standing around her in a courtly group, of which she was the queen, and a bright seraphic queen she looked. Nearly opposite sat another lady, whose whole sense of hearing seemed enraptured by the conversation of an elderly gentleman with white hair, rotundity of figure, and gold spectacles, dressed in black, but with a style which pronounced him not obdurate to the claims of certain good proportions. The lady thus engaged (and to her no pleasure was equal to the words then half whispered for her hearing alone) was a woman a little past the meridian of life,

soft and gentle in her expression, fair as any blonde could wish, with a sweetness of expression in her eyes and countenance that bore in it something purer than earth, approximating to that which hangs around the Mother of Sorrows of Raphael. A certain undefined air there was, too, of maternal solicitude—an expression on her face which seemed to have lingered still, after having lulled her first-born to its sleep, that enchanted the eye for its very simplicity and beauty. At the present moment her eyes rested upon the ground, showing the dark fringe of eye-lashes; there was a faint flush upon her cheek, and the tremble of an emotional smile around her lips, telling that the apparent coolness with which the conversation was addressed to her was, nevertheless, thrilling her soul. It was not of love that Lady Redhaven was listening to; she was and had been long since married, and moreover there was a marked respect—a look of penetrating sagacity in the speaker—which an *amant* would scarcely have revealed; and far, very far, was it from Provincial Dilworth's nature to talk of love and dalliance to ladies.

Lady Redhaven was one of the worthy Jesuit's finest conquests; but some two years ago, she, her

husband and family, had from Puseyism gone to Catholicism, and great was the sensation it had created, great the triumph accruing to the Latin Church, and to Mr. Dilworth in particular. He had labored hard, for the Provincial well knew that to win Lady Redhaven was to win an irresistible champion for his faith, who could work and gain ground where he dared not approach. Lady Redhaven was no half-pretender, no professional Catholic, but an enthusiastic believer and strenuous advocate for the propagation of her religion, and one who submissively yielded the powers of her mind to the direction of her confessor. That confessor was Mr. Dilworth, and the Provincial knew far better than herself the capacities for which her face and mind were eminently suited. She had already built a magnificient structure of Gothic mediæval art, had lavished her wealth upon its details, as propounded by a barefaced quack, who had smuggled himself into her good graces, hoping to pick the crumbs which fell so lavishly from her bounteous hand, that he might toady with better grace elsewhere. Five thousand pounds had barely sufficed to decorate the chapel of the Virgin, whilst a sixth of that sum had been deemed sufficient for the high altar.

But her devotion was sincere and holy; if the purposes of others were vile and garbled, under the mask of their priesthood and religion, she could not discern the wolf in the shepherd's clothing.

"Nay, your ladyship," continued the Jesuit, "your humility must be further shocked, I am afraid, for it is my duty to transmit to you from the Cardinal Palazzi, our friend in the Holy Conclave, the thanks of the Sovereign Pontiff for your zealous assistance; indeed, there is a small casket I am in the daily expectation of receiving, which contains an autograph letter to that effect, and a small 'Agnus' from the oratory of the Holy Father."

"I am afraid, Mr. Dilworth, I shall be too well rewarded in this world for my poor endeavours to promote the glory of God," interposed the lady in the sweetest accents.

"Not at all, your ladyship; you have far too humble an opinion of the merits your actions deserve. To become a light before men is, or ought to be, the aspiration of every good Catholic. But I was saying, his Holiness has expressed repeatedly an urgent desire to see his faithful daughter the Lady Redhaven; and I trust——"

"You have mentioned the greatest happiness

for which I pray, sir; believe me, when I can be dispensed with by my family, now getting great boys, the first steps I take will be towards the Eternal City—the shrine of all that is holy in our heavenly religion."

"And run away, I presume, from me, leaving me to fight all my own battles alone?"

"Ah! Mr. Dilworth, my works, the works of a woman, cannot aid you; but I will pray, oh! how ardently, that my revered father in God may succeed in the mighty designs he has for the glory of God's holy church."

"I could ill spare such a St. Francesca as your ladyship; already I have a share in a great work laid out for you, which may lead to a conversion second only in its importance to that of your ladyship's."

"Indeed, Mr. Dilworth!" exclaimed Lady Redhaven in surprise, trying to search the Jesuit's countenance for an explanation of his words, "I should deem myself highly honoured could I in any way promote such a blessed design. What may it be?"

"May I enquire whether your ladyship is acquainted with Lady Charlotte Ongar?"

"Not intimately; but so often as we have met

I have had reason to admire her—indeed to feel anxious to know more of her."

"A strange, I might almost say a miraculous, intervention threw her the other day into the arms of our Church."

"You speak metaphorically, I presume," said her ladyship, laughing.

"Highly so, as those arms were the property of our excellent friend Mr. Copinstall."

"How very strange; was it really Mr. Copinstall who arrived so timely to her assistance. The paper in which I saw the account did not mention his name."

"Fortunately not; at least it would not have mattered, indeed," added the Jesuit, correcting any impression of design that the words might have conveyed; "but it really seemed to me to point so strongly to a certain end, that I have been almost inclined to attribute it to divine interposition towards promoting her conversion."

"The designs of God are inscrutable; how often he makes use of the most trivial causes to develope the greatest results."

"Your ladyship speaks only my own thoughts. You know Colonel Frederick Chorley, if I mistake not."

"Yes, very well, a most complete Anglican. Despite his cloth I believe him a young man of highly religious principles. He is in great favour with the old Marquis; rumour has it there is some probability of his standing in a nearer relationship to him."

"That I question, my lady, though I certainly know he is very desirous to see Lady Charlotte, and the Marquis likewise, of the same High Church feelings as his own. He has some thoughts of seceding to us. I have no doubt shortly we shall succeed in convincing him."

"I am truly delighted to hear it—but with reference to Lady Charlotte."

"Yes, exactly; just so; let me see. Oh! your ladyship must be informed that Copinstall has met with a very cordial reception at Rochdale house, and that an intimacy is most likely to ensue through the friendship of the Colonel. Now the little part it would aid the great work in hand for your ladyship to enact, would be to sound ———."

"Dilworth! most potent chief of Jesuits and fair hearts," exclaimed a voice with a gentle slap on the shoulder, that directly roused the Provincial from his important discussion, at the moment he was most desirous of impressing his listener.

"Lady Redhaven's permission, and I will claim the favour of her partnership in this quadrille," said the musical notes of Colonel Chorley's voice, almost at the same moment. "An old standing debt, your ladyship, which you will not further defer I hope."

"Really, Colonel, I have danced twice to-night, and if you only knew how my age is ——"

"Parbleu! your ladyship must forget time never strikes the fairer portion of creation until rheumatism consigns them to crutches and a German spa. You are wholly unconventional in such an excuse."

"Well then, if my increased years can command no compassion, think of the mother of so many great boys as I have in this room."

"Impossible, your ladyship, whilst our gracious sovereign leads off the ball. Come, our *vis-à-vis* are waiting."

Lady Redhaven suffered herself to be lead away from her interesting confessor, though her sweet temper was slightly ruffled at an interruption so inopportune. She was deeply anxious to learn the true nature of the Jesuit's request, and the opportunity was gone for the evening. Towards Lady Charlotte Ongar she had long since entertained a

feeling warmer than those which are generally experienced for the friends made in the every day society of fashionable life. In a certain degree she had recognized a similarity of tastes, and though their intimacy had been confined to calls, and the strictures of *reunions*, she had observed sufficient to create a desire to know her better.

In the attainment of the end hinted at by the Provincial, she was unable to discern in what manner her own assistance could be available. Lady Redhaven was truly good, and believed that no conversion could be effected to her religion, but such as was implanted in the heart from on high. Her knowledge of such matters never descended into the depths of jesuitical craft; she firmly believed that no priest would ever seek to implant the doctrines of Catholicity, unless there existed a predisposed inclination on the part of the individual to receive them; much less did she ever conceive that objects ulterior to that of the advancement of God's glory dictated the impulses of the priesthood to acquire proselytes. The objects lay hid beneath a veil none can penetrate, but those whose purpose it is to avail themselves of the result. They can court observation and defy detection; for, the ostensible reason assigned

being the conversion of a heretic, *who* can point to the false plank and assert that their cause is not sound? They have a perfect right to give instruction in the tenets of their faith, to those seeking it. You cannot accuse them of influencing a convert; if others do so they are not accountable. If that convert chooses to build churches, endow schools, or adopt the seclusion of the veil, and dispose of her vast resources to a convent, are they to be held responsible for the zeal of their proselytes? In strict logic they are not, so long as they do not themselves propose such projects, and it is here the Jesuits have their accusers. *They* never influenced them; but did they never surround them with influences, not direct but indirect ones; and we all know indirect means are oftentimes surer, always more safe than direct measures.

The person who had tapped the Provincial upon his shoulder, and compelled him for a time to suspend his designs relative to Lady Charlotte Ongar, was Lord Henry Luton, the younger son of a Catholic peer, and an officer in the Royal Blues. Lord Henry was a Catholic; his family had been Catholics from the date when the arrogance of the Popedom compelled the kings of England and

France to hold the stirrup of the sovereign Pontiff's horse, and consequently antiquity held a claim on their allegiance to Rome. The clergy ever maintained that the peer and his sons were the staunchest of Catholics; but Mr. Dilworth, for one, knew that it required his utmost exertion by flattery, by concession, and by winking at innumerable defections, to keep them within the pale of the Church. He despised them from his heart; but their influence was superior to his own; and it was essential that they should rank as a bulwark for Catholicism in England. That their name, conjoined to others more active, would hold in check the eager malice of their opponents, and might prove a secure rampart under which to retreat, in case any unforseen mishap should reveal more than was intended to be seen and exasperate the populace against them. For such salient reasons then, Mr. Dilworth not only dwelt on the terms of the most respectful regard to the faltering peer, but studied to ingratiate himself in the opinion of his sons. Lord Henry was the best hearted, and most easily pleased; and as the Provincial once acted in the double capacity of chaplain and tutor in his father's establishment, some remnant of respect still existed upon his part towards his

cidevant instructor. Moreover Mr. Dilworth was useful upon occasions, and served at all times as a means of passing an otherwise dreary hour, by tormenting him with reciting every imaginable rumour relative to certain dreaded intentions of the Catholic nobility, which Mr. Dilworth knew there was too much reason to apprehend.

"Now, Dilworth, this is too bad of you," commenced the noble tormentor, "you have been talking treason to a lady actually in the saloon of a staunch Protestant duke."

"Tut, tut, my lord," replied the Provincial, in perfect good humour, "gossip, only gossip. You know I must keep up my character among the ladies as well as yourself."

"Faith if you discuss gossip so desperately serious, I am glad you are not my confessor. Why it was but ten minutes since Lord Woolsacend enquired who you were; said you looked amazingly like a Roman nuncio in disguise, and took a note of the circumstance to make a motion upon it in the Peers."

"That is one of your cajoles, Henry; I don't believe a word of it; ever since you were a boy you have taken delight in tormenting me."

"Good heavens! what an opinion; but do you

mind when, upon an occasion in 'auld lang syne,' your reverence cracked my noble head with a ruler, when we stuttered '*hic, hæc, hoc*' in the Manor library; and I swore that if I died under the effects of the vinegar and brown paper you plied with more alarm than discretion, I would haunt you? Well, since that occasion I have, when I meet your reverence, an impulsive desire to revenge the old sore; and thus I haunt you alive that my bones may rest in peace when I die."

Mr. Dilworth's features were strongly expressive of absolute contempt at the remark, but in another minute his large full eyes were peering at his companion through the gold spectacles with a jocular expression.

"Henry Luton, Lord Henry Luton, from the days of thy infancy, when, to alarm your lady mother, they strapped thy young legs under a poney to follow the hounds, up to the hour when you disturbed thy old tutor conversing with Lady Redhaven, you were a sad trouble to me; when shall I convert you from the errors of such folly? when impress, not by rules but by argument, upon your giddy brain, that you often by one word of foolishness, dispel the hard-wrought spell it has taken wise men months to produce?"

"There! said I not you plotted treason. I knew it, and that is why I came to disturb your villanous purposes. Away traitor; follow to the next saloon, and wash with champagne from the vineyard of St. Peré the unhallowed projects from your heart."

With that Lord Henry caught the worthy Provincial by the arm, and led him with a strong pressure towards the gallery where refreshments were spread, in all the costly profusion of art and princely magnificence. Apart from the merry throng of flushed dancers, who were seeking refrigerative beverages, Lord Henry continued his attack upon the Jesuit.

"And what, good father, may be the game most eagerly pursued: surely you have well nigh cleared the preserves in this country of everything worth giving sport to such eclectic taste as your own?"

"The game is yet both abundant and noble," replied the Provincial. "Every royal stag run down leads but to another still more noble."

"And the latest conquest?"

"Ask me two or three months hence, Henry, and you shall open your eyes in wonder."

"Indeed! that is to say you are only yet laying the dogs on the scent; but I shall never be aston-

ished until the old monk's prophecy is fulfilled, and then, faith, I'll go to La Trappe myself."

"Make no rash promises, you may see the day yet. England will be Catholic before we see the century past. The monk meant one hundred instead of fifty years."

"Aye, but you work only at the top of a tree, father; you are lopping off the branches which mount the highest to heaven, instead of applying the axe to the root at once."

"First denude the tree of its fairest ornaments, my son, and then there will be less outcry when you propose felling it *in toto*. Nobody will compassionate a fallen trunk; but if its splendid limbs should still remain, the cry might be 'shame on those who levelled such proud branches with the dust.' But we are not loosing sight of the trunk either; the masses are not neglected."

At this moment Colonel Chorley passed close to them with Lady Charlotte Ongar leaning on his arm, looking still more radiant from the slight flush which the waltz had given to her complexion. Other gentlemen approached. Some military men and some previously known to the Provincial, exchanged greetings with him. The Colonel and his fair charge became mixed in the group, and the

Jesuit was introduced as plain Mr. Dilworth to her he so much longed to become acquainted with. The few minutes she remained, the Jesuit had the opportunity of directing her attention to the face of a Madona almost opposite to the spot where they stood. A peculiar light from a resplendent lustre had cast a thrilling expression upon the countenance of the *chef d'œuvre* of the great master; there was a hallowed tenderness, so deep, so exquisite, yet so well calculated to impress the mind as that which distinguished the Mother of God from the ordinary appearances of mortality; a beam of such estatic resignation, as dwelt upon those downcast eyes and seemed to quiver in the present light upon the lips of the canvass face, so lifelike and so true to the ideality of immaculate sorrow, that Lady Charlotte, upon following the Jesuit's motion to observe it, exclaimed—"Oh, that heavenly face!" and remained for a few moments gazing upon it, till her lovely eyes seemed to glaze with tears.

"One could almost, while looking upon that," said the Provincial, in a low tone at her side, "*almost* forgive the Catholics for venerating her as they do."

"I never saw it in a more exquisite light," replied lady Charlotte, with emotion. "Never."

"Her eyes seem to me, as I stand here, as though they beamed upon your ladyship with all the fulness of maternal joy. The two together might make the subject of a splendid design;" and the Provincial threw a sidelong glance upon the averted countenance of his companion, as though watching every thought passing in her mind. And as she made no reply, he added, "But, alas! where is the man now that could render the glories of such a picture as did he, who must have loved the original of that picture in his innermost soul before he could produce such an exquisite realization of his conception?"

"You are indeed right," said Lady Charlotte; "I can now understand what it is that makes the Catholics render idolatrous devotion to the Madona; were I to study that very long, my own senses would be betrayed into error."

"You ladyship will excuse me did I say, that Catholics only feel towards her as you do at this moment."

"That is not correct, sir," replied her ladyship, turning round with sudden asperity upon the Provincial; "the Catholics do adore her, and I—— but perhaps I am addressing a Catholic, if so——"

"A most indifferent one, your ladyship; yet I

would assure you that whatever may be the misguided zeal of its ignorant children, the educated portion are superior to such a fearful error."

"I will say no more; forgive my heedless remark should it have occasioned you pain. I have too high an opinion of the higher class of Catholics to believe them guilty of anything so awful."

With a graceful inclination she moved towards her partner, who had been standing listening to some animated observation from a gentleman whose immense black whiskers and moustachios proclaimed him a son of Mars; while the imperious tone of his voice spoke of command, and the oft recurring "I," "I," "I," of a yet more important egotism. Lady Charlotte laid her hand upon the Colonel's arm to intimate her readiness to leave the group, which aroused the gallant officer to a sense of his duties. As he turned to go he whispered in the Provincial's ear—"Go and settle that great man in his immensity of self-conceit."

Mr. Dilworth, agreeably to the recommendation, insinuated himself into the small knot that had gathered around the large whiskered officer, with faces expressive of toadyism rather than of respect; if we except Lord Henry Luton, who seemed, by agreeing with everything said, to be slyly urging the speaker

into a fearfully exaggerated view of the subject under discussion. The topic animadverted upon with so much *amplement* was a scheme of military theology; comprehensive, at one and the same time of the doctrines of Henry of Exeter and Baptist Noel, grounded upon the Roman belief of infallibility and unity—not meaning the Pope, but the said military theologian, as a lieutenant-colonel of dragoons, being the rock upon which his soldiers' faith should be built, and his orderly-room the cynosure towards which all looked for the doctrines constituting that creed, whatsoever it might be. He had succeeded in mystifying his listeners to his heart's content, but the *dictum* prescribed no matter of what he had compounded the ingredients strongly reminding them of that existing in their respective corps.

"Now," said the modern dictator, with the air of a public lecturer, "I find that in my corps, there is existing an influence quite contrary to my wishes, and indeed to my express commands; strange, my dear sirs, but I can assure you it is an astounding fact, the more astonishing you will say when you reflect whose corps it is, that Catholicism is actually making rapid grounds in my regiment —in my own regiment, gentlemen!"

All the listeners looked, in company with the eloquent and religious Colonel, perfectly aghast. "Gentlemen," continued the speaker, sinking his voice from that of a dragoman with curling mustachoes to the insensate pathetic, "I need not say how hurt I felt, humiliated, in the conviction that the regiment of a staunch Protestant peer was falling away from its allegiance and assuming the black leprosy of the Roman Catholic faith. I mean nothing disrespectful to a noble lord among us" (the gallant colonel meant precisely the reverse, inasmuch as he entertained a lively abhorrence of the noble lord—meaning Lord Henry Luton—on account of some disparaging remarks made in the House by the young lord's father concerning himself); "but I must be permitted to say to brother officers that I have laboured for that regiment; strove with my name, my wealth, to make it renowned, glorious, and, and,—and *crack*. Gentlemen, is it not villanous that such plots should be permitted to exist to destroy the credit of my corps, and under no other ministry but a free trade ministry?" (No, no, from Lord Luton.) "I repeat it, a free trade ministry," continued the Colonel, waxing warm again, "would such licentious liberty in religion be tolerated?"

"My lord," said Lord Luton, taking advantage of a short pause in the Colonel's declamation, "I can perfectly agree with you about the increase of Catholicity in the army. In my own corps I am delighted to see the rapidly augmenting files I march to chapel every Sunday. It reflects the highest credit upon the Catholic priesthood for their pious exertions."

"Pious exertions! The noble lord says pious exertions, if I do not misapprehend," exclaimed the black Colonel, growing pale with suppressed rage at the hardy declaration of an opinion so contrary to his own. "I do not wish to throw disparagement upon the character of Lord Luton—I mean his professional character—but I can assure your lordship, on the experience of an officer of some standing, that such 'pious exertions' pave the way to mutiny, to disaffection, to letter writing to newspapers, and every other species of insubordination; and that if your lordship would stand well in the eyes of a certain individual, tolerably well known to myself, I would advise you to repudiate such sentiments as those." Having delivered this severe reprimand, the Colonel adjusted his pelisse to his satisfaction, and proceeded to play with his mustachoes, and bite

their curling ends between remarkably white teeth.

" Pray, my lord, might I enquire whether your lordship has devised any means of counteracting this very baneful influence so rapidly growing in your very distinguished corps," enquired Mr. Dilworth, thrusting himself forward exactly opposite the Colonel. The Colonel, and every body present forming the distinguished group, looked astonishment upon the sable form of the Provincial, whose garb proclaimed him not of them; and his quere for some minutes seemed to puzzle the renowned soldier, to ascertain whether impudence or interest had prompted its utterance; but the gallant Colonel having some vague idea concerning a man in black, who perambulated the army annually, and with two or more other white cravated gentlemen, toddled into the barrack school, styling himself the Chaplain-General, identified the Provincial in his mind with this functionary.

" I am not aware," he replied, eyeing the Jesuit with curious contempt, " that I am warranted in answering the question you, sir, apparently a civilian, put to me in my capacity as a colonel in Her Majesty's service. The regulations are stringent on this head, but for the information of the officers

present; I will say I have adopted measures for that purpose."

"And what may they be, my lord?" enquired the Provincial, adjusting his spectacles, as though expecting to hear something that would startle them from their right position.

"I have adopted such means as a colonel could, sir," replied the officer, something disconcerted by the abrupt manner of his interrogator. "I have prohibited any Catholic priest being admitted into barracks. I have passed over Catholic non-commissioned officers in the list of promotion, and refuse promotion to any private who is a Catholic. I refuse all recruits who will not declare themselves staunch Protestants. I have directed the adjutant to attend the Catholics on church parade, which he performed so well as to inflict punishment upon every man, under pretence of being irregular, or dirty in his accoutrements—ha! ha! and, in fact, I show my utter displeasure to those who frequent the popish chapel in every possible way; undoubtedly I shall weary them out of it."

"A very pretty category of tyrannical measures, my lord," exclaimed the Jesuit, with the utmost unconcern of the rank he addressed. "Your lord-

ship would have made an admirable Star-Chamber counsellor in the days of the virgin Bess."

"Sir!" demanded the Colonel, stepping back as though he had unconsciously addressed a maniac.

"Stay, my lord and gentlemen; allow me, ere you separate, to make one observation. Your lordship and the majority of the officers present, joined in your lordship's condemnation of the apostacy of the ranks: everybody must of course deplore such a fearful catastrophy, occurring in the glorious, renowned, crack regiment of the noble Colonel's, and of my friend's, Lord Luton; but I must say, the remedy applied is a strange one, yet your lordship has applied this remedy quite irrespective of the disease. Shall I tell you, gentlemen, where the cause arises of apostacy? Not in the free-trade ministry, but in the utter neglect of all religious instruction in the army. The staunch Protestant commanders of the army allow to some seventy thousand men *five* chaplains to guide them to Heaven; I don't know how many generals there are to lead them elsewhere. May I enquire of the noble Colonel, does he ever care for the religious cure of his men?"

"Certainly, sir, I march them every Sunday to prayers, either in the church or riding-school."

"Precisely, my lord; and those prayers last on an average half-an-hour, and from that till the following Sunday, the thought of God never enters their minds. And what, then, results to this vast mass of men? Why, they sink into the brutality of beasts, and become atheists and men destitute of one hallowed thought their life long; and the Catholic priest, with more charity than your Protestant fat rector, comes in and speaks of the blessings of religion, and the hopes of a better life than the one they have to toil through; and so they embrace Catholicity because you provide no other; and yet, my lord, you say you will weary them out of that."

"We don't know you, sir, as a military authority," replied the Colonel, surprised by the new light thrown upon the subject, "and you may be correct or not in your interpretation of the case; but you must allow us to be the best judge of the best promotive of military discipline. *I* cannot give the men parsons, what the deuce has a colonel to do with chaplains?"

"This much, my lord; that he should not set up military discipline as the only gospel a soldier

has to read; and that he is bound to try and afford spiritual comfort for his men. You are one of the hereditary legislators of the kingdom, yet you sit in Parliament from one year's end to another without ever giving a thought for the amelioration, temporal or spiritual, of the men you command. Not only you, but scores among your cloth who owe their seats to the valor of British soldiers, sit like stocks and stones; and for ought you care the men may become brutes in body and devils in mind, provided they comply with military discipline. Religion it would seem is antipathetical to the profession of a soldier. So you see, my lord, how it is that Catholicity makes her converts even in your spotless corps, and the men grasp the errors of Rome because their officers will not exert themselves to procure them a better. Eh, my lord, you understand now."

Indeed his lordship did understand, but not as Mr. Dilworth had surmised; who after this last speech had retired from the clique. His lordship could only understand the audacity which had given expression to so much which he could construe in no other light than a personal invective, and his astonishment was palpable.

"Is that a madman, Lord Luton," he enquired of the nobleman who stood laughing aside.

"No, I believe not: rather think he is the Pope's nuncio."

"God, if he was the Pope himself I would like to have him at the triangles: the impudent scoundrel."

In the repetition of the like phrases the black Colonel continued to indulge, till he found himself standing alone; his late companions having discarded him for the supper table, a more delectable subject for discussion than the Colonel's military religious argument.

The festivities of the evening were drawing to a conclusion when the Lady Charlotte Ongar descended the staircase to her carriage, leaning on Colonel Chorley, and followed behind by her sister and Lord Henry Luton.

"Who is that remarkable looking man, Frederick, talking to the officer of hussars below."

"Black silk stockings and gold spectacles," asked Lord Henry from behind.

"Yes."

"Mr. Dilworth, the Provincial of Jesuits in London."

"Provincial of Jesuits!" exclaimed Lady Charlotte in surprise.

"Exactly so. Chorley, I do believe the Colonel wants to fight him, he is asking him for his card."

"Charlotte," said Lady Flora, "I saw that man speaking to you. Oh how very dreadful such a character should be admitted here."

"He is the most gallant of men, Flora, to the ladies," said the Colonel over his shoulder.

"Never. Commend me to him, Colonel, and see how I will flirt with him."

"Flora, my dear, not so loud," remonstrated Lady Charlotte.

"Papa," exclaimed Flora upon joining him in the hall below, "would you credit it, we have had a Jesuit here, and Chorley says he will introduce me upon the next opportunity."

"Comé girls, the carriage has drawn up," said the Marquis impatiently.

They passed towards the portico, accompanied by the Colonel, Lord Henry, and Mr. Dilworth, the latter walking side by side with Lady Charlotte; but he drew back suddenly, at the same time the lady gave a faint scream and placed her hand to her bosom.

"What is the matter, Charlotte, are you ill?" said the Marquis.

"No, sir, only a sudden chill ran through me."

"You have danced too much, my dear. Keep your mantilla closer."

"Thank you, sir, I feel nothing of it now."

In a few more minutes the gentlemen had taken their farewell; even Mr. Dilworth had been honored with a polite inclination, and the Marquis and his daughters were hastening home from the night's revel. The cold grey light of day-dawn was struggling to find its way through the crooked streets and narrow lanes; and the lack-lustre faces of the peer's daughters not ill resembled that of gas lights as they shone pale and colourless in the coming day.

"Come and take some breakfast with me, Henry, and you, Colonel; I can give you a good cigar to while away the early morning; I know you never sleep," said the Jesuit.

"And a cup of undoubted Mocha will you promise with it, Doctor?" (The Jesuit was styled thus among his familiars.)

"As good as ever steamed its fragrance in the Palais Royal."

"Agreed," cried both.

" My brougham is at the corner, dismiss your carriages," said the Jesuit; and the three, arm in arm, walked to the Jesuit's comfortable double brougham.

CHAPTER V.

MATIN CONFERENCES—DARK INSINUATIONS—IDLE WORDS CONVEYING ASTUTE MEANINGS—FAMILY DISCLOSURES—THE JESUIT'S TALE.

In the same library of the same house in which we first introduced the Rev. Mr. Dilworth, now congregated the trio who had left the ball together. A small clear fire burnt in the grate; for though summer, the morning was chilly and damp, and mingled the faint light of its flicker with the increasing daylight, which, however, did not speedily penetrate through the dingy windows and yet more dingy hangings which hung heavily before the recesses of the windows. The Jesuit and Colonel Chorley were snug in two high-backed chairs, and Lord Henry lay upon his back on an antique sofa, in an attitude not quite so elegant as the lovers of decorum might have deemed consistent in the pre-

sence of a clergymen. Mr. Dilworth and the Colonel quietly puffed their cigars, watching the exertions of his lordship in his endeavour to emit smoke through the various outlets of his face and head. A handsome coffee service stood upon a massive salver; the cups half-full, the clouds of smoke floating over it, and wafting away to the book-shelves where it tried to hide itself in the crevices. Lord Henry, tired of his exertions, allowed his large meerschaum pipe to rest on a pillar, and thus addressed the Jesuit—

"Holy Father, could but that great chief (your General) see you at this moment, how many years solitary contemplation at Stoneyhurst would he decree you?"

"I cannot imagine, Henry; probably the penance might be the conversion of a young reprobate, commonly called Lord Henry Luton."

"Ah! it must be a conversion, or else it would not be jesuitical. But verily, Dr. Dilworth, I uphold ye; there is a quiet charm in this fusty old library quite enchanting; this sofa; this dressing gown—patchwork from the hands of some fair penitent; that lazy steam crawling from the coffee and writhing itself in disgust at the smoke from Chorley's cigar; that struggling daylight, just

showing the distinction between one volume and another on the shelves; those fearful old books, bound in black, the terror of my juvenile and the reproach of my present days, all seem to combine in the assurance that Dr. Dilworth is just as well able to appreciate the comforts of a *confesseur aristocratique*, as he is the duties, all honorary by the bye, of the scapula."

"Most unquestionably, Luton," observed Chorley, emitting a spiral wreath of blue smoke, "would you have a man, even though he be a Jesuit, impervious to the good things of the world —aye even to the loveliness of a Madona, by Carlo Dolci, and the soft eyes of Lady Charlotte Ongar?"

"Ah! a rat, a rat; more conspiracy; stab him, Chorley, for a knave," shouted Luton.

"No, no; no conspiracy there, Luton," replied the Jesuit, laughing. "I only drew her ladyship's attention to the Madona; but you see the Colonel's 'green eye' was on, and no wonder, for she is a beautiful woman—a piece of statuary though. I prefer her sister infinitely, myself; there is more real nature in her than Lady Charlotte."

"How do you know that, Doctor," enquired Luton.

"Only by observation; I am not acquainted with her; be under no apprehension, Henry, for you fair *amante;* nay, nor blush so at her name."

"Pshaw! you are only a sift, Doctor; but you taught me jesuitry, remember, years ago. You won't find out."

"Boy soldier! you make a depth where none exists, and then drown yourself in it. But, Colonel, you dream, or are wandering in the corridors of Rochdale House."

"Not in the least, Doctor: you said Charlotte Ongar was a rare piece of statuary. In what, pray?"

"Her figure, to begin with; and then her mind is formed of marble."

"How so?"

"I do not mean to take the conceit from you; but have you never discovered her rather—slightly—unimpressible of ideas? To me her mind seemed as of steel; moulded, it is true, and moulded well, but in a form which few natures could find sympathy in."

"Humph. You may be partially correct, and not far from the real truth as to a certain unconvertibility about her nature. You Jesuits are

marvellous men at conversions; but I could defy you there. I wish to heaven it were otherwise."

"The Lord in his own good time, Colonel, may change the tone of her mind. I have known more wonderful transmutations in my day; it requires, however, the force of circumstances to melt the firmness of a reposing mind, such as misfortune, affliction, or sorrow."

"I never saw Charlotte moved from her resolute firmness of character but once, and that was ——. Well no matter."

"Not when her aunt died, I will be sworn," said Luton, between the puffs of his pipe; "at least judging her ladyship by my own feelings, I am quite convinced it was not."

"Now you are wrong for once in your life, Luton the sagacious, it was on that very occasion."

"What! sorrow for that terrible old lady who, faith, could never sympathize with aught but a caged bear?"

"So the world held her," said the Jesuit; "but I believe a better or more amiable woman never breathed."

"Did you know her, Dilworth?" enquired the the Colonel.

"I was with her on her deathbed. She died in France."

"That is news for Charlotte; she would give the world to know anything relating to her last moments."

"I have no important disclosures to make thereto, Colonel," said the Jesuit nonchalantly. "I believe the property reverted *in toto* to Lady Charlotte."

"Yes; but there subsisted a powerful attachment between them, and some similarity of disposition."

"Then the Lord deliver you, Colonel Chorley, from Lady Charlotte," said Lord Luton, as though in the deepest commiseration.

"Thank you, comrade, but I would rather not."

"Horror of horrors; shall I ever forget one evening, when a young mushroom of sixteen, tripping over the hearth-rug and spilling my coffee all down her fawn-coloured satin. Oh, fawn-coloured satin! I turn hot when I see it. You know what it is to have the shine taken out of you, on a brigade day, by the Duke: at least if you don't I do. Well, old Lady Ongar's quiet put down was fifty times worse than that."

"And so you naturally conclude that because, by your awkwardness, you provoked her she was an unamiable woman?" observed the Colonel.

"No; not exactly that, man; but you know there are two ways of expressing anger. Had her ladyship boxed my ears I should have thought no more of it after the pique had blown bye; but she scorned me with such withering hatred, with such contemptuous allusions to the peculiarities and failings of one of my illustrious ancestors; and all this, too, in such a cold dogged manner and chilly voice, that no one could hear but myself; that, on my honor, my blood runs cold to think of it. Verily I never heard such biting, freezing malice, as breathed in her words on that evening: never saw a woman so possessed of the fiend, only without showing it, as the old lady was when I spilled my coffee, through boyish clumsiness, over the fawn coloured satin."

"Had you never offended her before," enquired the Provincial.

"Never; she was always treated as a queen at the castle. She was on a visit; but her speech bore stronger reference to the arch-fiend, whose spawn I was, than to my wonder-stricken self."

"She must have had some latent cause, inde-

pendent of the coffee, to heap her spleen upon you," said the Colonel.

"Most probably," observed the Jesuit.

"Did you ever hear anything, Doctor, when our tutor, that would give you a clue to such a strange circumstance."

"I have heard the story repeated from an old priest who acted as chaplain at the time; but it is an idle tale of folly, illustrative only of pampered indulgence, and the evils which ensue to unbridled passions."

"Doctor, by the powers of Jupiter we will have this story. I would have given hundreds many a day to discover the secret of that old lady's fawn-coloured satin. Another brew of coffee as a specific, in the event of your getting sentimental, or under the delusion you are exhorting your congregation to repentance, and the certain result of my getting dreamy, and my head swimming in the waltz with Flora Ongar, and being reprimanded by the interminable fawn-coloured lady, for having my nightcap on, which I cannot pull off."

"And wake up tearing out your hair by the handful," interposed the Colonel.

"Horrid! shocking effect of dancing and oyster

supper, tobacco and bad gin at the Cellars. Doctor commence."

"But if I divulge family secrets?"

"Family fiddlesticks, it will all come out some day as large as life, in a future edition of the 'Romance of the Peerage.' Very amusing, eh, to see one's illustrious ancestors turn out to be the biggest set of black legs, cut throats, and lascivious old Turks that ever turned into the green room or Crockey's? Pleasant, very, to those who talk large of Norman descent, to discover they were the natural children of some travelling tinker, whom some eccentric dowager had a fancy for: or the true representative of the Plantagenets (how fond we are of Plantageneting our heirs-apparent), is a respectable sort of man, taking half-pence at the next turnpike! Mr. Plantagenet Snooks, Turnpike Keeper, Puddinghead Lane—that would look *tonish* on a card."

"Well, if you are so indifferent to the follies which characterized your progenitor," said the Jesuit, throwing himself back in his chair, "I will recite it, as well as I can remember, exactly as the superanuated Jesuit narrated it to me."

THE JESUIT'S TALE.

You know, my friend, commenced the Provincial, that your grandfather does not bear the most unspotted reputation in the genealogical annals of your illustrious house; indeed, though some of its members in early ages have deeds recorded of them in which every species of crime finds a place, there was the palliating excuse of ignorance, and the desperate times in which they lived for them, which cannot be urged in favor of your grandsire. The late Earl of Beechmere, nevertheless, was a man who once gave promise of better things. His education had been conducted with care, under the direction of an eminent member of our holy order, and early in life his conduct was as eminent for regularity and religion as it was subsequently characterized for vice and depravity. Still in the midst of his worst excesses he was ever a steady Catholic, and I believe the tuition he received in his infancy was the means of preserving him from that last fearful crime,—apostacy to the faith of St. Peter.

Unfortunately, in order to meet political ends, he was drawn into a marriage that subsequently

proved most unhappy; and after leading a few years of wretchedness in matrimony a separation was arranged, and he then entered upon a life scandalously profligate. But that was an age when licentiousness never disgraced a gentleman, or expelled him from virtuous society. His noble descent and vast wealth enabled him to retain his position, and, if possible, exalted him higher in the estimation of a world immoral to its heart's core. He was in the height of his unrestrained and reckless existence, when the circumstance occurred which brought down the irreparable hatred of the late Lady Ongar upon your family.

A favourite seat of the Earl's was an old Manor house, situated in one of the midland counties, which had been built by one of his ancestors at an enormous outlay, but never completed. It was pulled down some years before your birth, so you cannot remember it; but it was a princely place, though darkened by associations that left a sad blot upon the escutcheon of the Lutons. What his ancestor had not accomplished in the interior decoration of this mansion, the Earl completed in regal magnificence. The most exquisite workmanship was displayed in the heavy antique furniture, at that time the rage; the walls hung with the most rare

and costly works of the masters; and the old oaken pannels were studded with gems from the pencils of the best living artists. I walked through those stately rooms shortly after the Earl had gone to another world, to account for the misdeeds of his ill-spent life; and the desolation which seemed to surround each—not that the apartments had been divested of any of their magnificent embellishments, but that life no longer breathed in them—vividly impressed me with the end of dissipation. I had heard of the scenes which had been enacted there, of the revelry in debauchery, the mad excitement engendered by play, the foul sin-besotted career of a drunkard, whose lavish expenditure was yet counterbalanced by inherent avarice. The wit, the beauty, and talent that had lighted those rooms with the brilliancy of all that can captivate the senses and recompense a man for eternal damnation. The hollow echo of my own footsteps was the only sound that now wrung upon the painted ceiling, where so lately the laugh and jest passed round in eager mirth, and the dice-box rattled the death knell of many a proud youth's hopes and ambition. The contrast seemed fearful, and was fearful when I thought of the end. What had it come to now? The silence of a marble tomb

enclosed the remains of him who had given existence to such scenes, had been the ready partaker in every excess, the sharer of every villanous action. That was a speculation which was too awful to entertain. But the remembrance of that undisturbed stroll through the Manor house was not speedily eradicated from my mind. The countenances of the portraits—some of his own ancestors known to history for their mighty deeds, some the beatific faces of our fair dames of the middle ages—wore an expression of recent indignation subsided into compassion, as though they had been witnesses of the awful retribution inflicted upon him, that had so desecrated their name and memory. The painted staircase, representing the assumption of the Blessed Virgin, in imitation of that by Raffaelle, darkened by rich stained glass in the mullioned window, had again the same sorrow-haunted faces depicted in the seraphs and angels as though they mourned the doom of that lost man. I went into his death chamber—it had remained untouched as he died. As he had died in horror and despair they had removed him, when the last struggle was over, to the chapel; but the marks remained of the death agony. The bed in confusion, the hangings rent, a crucifix lay broke

upon the ground as he had thrown it from him in despair, and the gray hair from his head lay scattered over the coverlet as he had torn it from his head and shrieked in terror for his ebbing life. A breviary lay open on a table near to the bed-side, and an Agnus Dei and miraculous medal were suspended at its foot; but, alas! everything but too strongly indicated that the great bad man had died in his sins.

"Now to return to this story from which I am diverging; first, give me another cup of coffee. Henry, are you awake?"

"Quite. Never was more interested, though you have not spared my luckless grandsire."

"Well, to begin," continued the Jesuit, replacing his cup in the Colonel's hand, whose attention had been riveted to the Provincial's recital.

Among the most steady adherents to the Earl was Lord Ongar, a younger brother of the Marquis of Rochdale, and a man of very superior character to that which was common among the aristocracy of that day—they are wonderfully changed these fifty years. But Lord Ongar was a man not suited to become the companion of a professed rake, such as the Earl was well known to be; yet there was an evident partiality upon the

part of your grandfather to court the good will of his Lordship. Early in life they had been boon friends, but latterly they had subsided into a familiar acquaintance. Lord Ongar was a man of gloomy temperament and with painfully sensitive feelings; yet enduring to the last degree, and capable of undergoing a purgatory of sorrow, rather than forego any ideal conception which may have got possession of his mind. He had married, and for him unfortunately, an ambitious, vain woman, as little capable of appreciating the good part of her husband's disposition as she was of relinquishing the leading passion of her heart. She was a remarkably fine woman, proud and impenetrable to simple joys, devotedly fond of pleasure, and a desperate gamester. They say matrimony is a lottery; it is a matter, from which being exempt, I have had little inclination to study; but how it ever came to pass that the ordinary looking, quiet, amiable, and affectionate Lord Ongar, should choose such a wife as the bold, imperious and flattered woman he selected, has ever remained a mystery to me; and I know it did to others who had sore reason to repent it their life long.

I have said that the Earl evinced a partiality for his Lordship, it would have been more proper to

say for the smiles showered upon him by his lady, who struck by his handsome face, courtly manners, his flattery, rank, and love of pleasure, beheld in him a stepping-stone to higher fame, or, more truly, defame. The Earl, I believe, contemplated no injury to his friend's honor, but his wealth, placed almost solely at the disposal of his wife, held out a temptation to an avaricious nature and an accomplished gambler, that could not be repelled. He beguiled her to play and she lost large sums, which he always pretended to return by presenting her with costly presents, which were, indeed, family heir-looms. The husband, so completely wrapt in his idolatrous devotion to his wife, could not see the precipice which was opening up both for himself and her. At last the startling conviction was rendered too palpable for further evasion; and from a man of great wealth he discovered his property dwindled comparatively to insignificance.

They had one son, and in alarm for him, lest he should be left a beggar, he reproached his wife, threw himself before her, and implored her to forego the desperate ruin she was preparing for herself, him, and her child. But Lady Ongar was too much occupied with her schemes of ambition

to heed the supplication. She despised her husband, and she told him so; upbraided him for the very qualities in which she should have found her happiness, and still played on.

Loss followed loss, and the Earl still upheld her with the assurances of a turn in the luck; but her *penchant* for play needed not that, she scarce thought of her loss, her heart was in the bare fact of play—in the wild excitement it procured, the appendages which surrounded the devotee at her nightly and daily seat at the table. At length all had gone; there remained but a sum of twenty thousand pounds the residue of Lord Ongar's riches, and this he had resolution enough to deny her. It was the first time her puppet husband had refused her most trifling request; it was the first time she had ever been obliged to express more than a command to obtain her utmost desires, and the determined refusal with which he met her demand for the last sum thunderstruck her. But he was immoveable; he had told her why, not for himself, but for his son, and to save her from beggary. No artifice could cajole him from his purpose, threat affect him, or pretended affection wean it from him. The *cidevant* gambler appealed to him who had first taught her the expensive

pleasure, but the Earl, though avaricious as any miser in the acquisition of money, was as profuse as the greatest spendthrift in dispensing it again. He gave them an invitation to spend a few months in retirement at the Manor house, which the poor broken-hearted lord was glad to accept, now that he could no longer appear as he was wont, and to save her from the disgrace which attends the fate of a reduced nobleman.

It is a strange circumstance in the history of this man, that though his wife had brought ruin and disgrace on him and his family, though her fame became the topic of scandal, and her name associated as the greatest gamester of the day, his affections, shown too well, never wavered. He hoped now temptation was removed, the tempter would haunt her no longer, and his solicitude never wearied. By her side at all times he strove to relieve the *ennui* which oppressed her, to paint better times coming, to seek and revive in her heart aspirations for nobler things: but he failed, utterly failed; her head and heart were with the Earl and his throng of parasites, and the humility or affection of her lord weighed but as a feather in the balance against these.

The retirement promised by the Earl at the

Manor house turned into the round of pleasures inseparable from the life of a Sybarite, with the confusion and incessant excitement incident to a modern Pandemonium. Lord Ongar was made the subject of fresh persecution by his relentless wife; and he wandered among the picturesque loveliness of the surrounding country, a man bearing in his bosom a sea of trouble, desolate and distracted, with but one hope to cling to and that was his son—the child for whom he endured so much.

My worthy friend, the old Jesuit, lived at the Manor then, for even in the midst of his worst excesses the Earl still maintained an outward display of religion. Often has he dilated to me upon the sorrowing sight it was, to see the father day by day lead out his little son, and inculcate to his early mind the love of God's beautiful creation, impress a tender affection for the mother it never saw, and an abhorrence of all games of chance. There seemed yet something for him worth living for—an earthly pleasure yet remaining to link him to his tenement of clay. It was during this period that the old priest became, as it were, his only companion, and great was the comfort the poor lord derived from his one companion. Nor was that

friendship lost, for ere many months had elapsed it pleased Heaven to take Lord Ongar into the bosom of his own faith. Thus even out of great evil came great good.

A year wore away in the seclusion of the old manor. The pleasure-seeking party had dispersed and met again. Lady Ongar had accompanied the Earl to London, and the report against her was loud and rife; but the rumours reached not the heart-broken husband, buried with his son and the old priest under the shade of the glorious elms of the Manor house. Upon the re-assembling of the guests the importunities of his wife were renewed with fresh vigour, but in vain. The Lord Ongar was sinking rapidly to his grave, but she seemed to hail the completion of her handiwork with joy. One day she had pressed him harder than usual, urged him by everything holy to pay her debts lost in gambling, and even threatened to disgrace him—to take from him his son. The only reply that she could extort, for he had never reproached her since that day when he showed her the ruin she was about to entail on them, was, "Have a little patience, Martha; bear with me yet a little longer and I shall be gone, and then

you will be at liberty to recruit your lost fortune and name by a wealthy marriage."

There was still one artifice left untried, which, bad as she was, Lady Ongar felt some remorse in putting into execution; that was to deprive him of his son—to sever the last link which bound him to his wealth. Every other scheme which suggested itself to her depraved heart having proved fruitless, she, with the assistance of the Earl, attempted her last diabolical effort. The boy, then but a child of five years, was removed by stealth from his small crib in the night, and conveyed nobody knew where. The poor Lord, as soon as he learnt this, seemed to have received his final death blow. He uttered no word of reproach, no entreaty or expostulation; but his agonizing groans, as he roamed through the dark woods by himself, told of the torture his own weakness had brought upon him. The worthy priest never left him for any length of time; but, without disturbing the solitude which he sought, or adding fresh grief to his mind by tendering useless advice and consolation, ever hovered near to him. One attempt he made to regain for the suffering man his only earthly treasure. He entreated the Earl to relinquish such a cruel and fearful purpose; and even

plain and humble man as he was, encountered an interview with the heartless Lady Ongar. The one pleaded ignorance of the affair, and declined to interfere in the private quarrels of man and wife; the other treated him and his supplication with supercilious contempt, and dared him ever to undertake such a mission again. He wrote to Lord Ongar's brother, the present Marquis, but he was then travelling with his sister, and communications were doubtful of reaching him; at least so it appeared, for they never received the Jesuit's urgent letters.

It was in the twilight of a lovely summer's evening, three days after the removal of his son, that Lord Ongar entered the Manor house, after his long daily wandering in the adjacent woods of the manorial grounds. The worthy father, unceasing in his watchfulness over the distracted parent and heart-broken husband, had followed him closely; but as he entered the state apartments, which ran in a long suite of rooms from one end of the mansion to the other, he stopped short at the first door, inasmuch that he never intruded himself upon the Earl without an express invitation; delicacy forbade him to do so now. Nevertheless a strange foreboding assured him something was about to

occur that needed his presence; his anxiety and fears worked upon him so strongly that the perspiration stood thick upon his forehead as he descended the grand painted staircase. Unconsciously he murmured an "Ave Maria," he knew not for what, to allay the trouble and perplexity of his mind. As he reached the bottom step, he turned towards the magnificent representation on the walls. In the glimmer of the twilight the figure of the Queen of Heaven was still plainly discernable. The priest gazed for a moment upon it, when the eyes, represented as looking upward, seemed turned upon him; the lips seemed to tremble like the chequered sunlight upon leaves hanging over rippling water, and a voice whispered—"Hasten to the terrace steps." The Jesuit darted from the house and sought the spot indicated by the unknown whisper. The terrace, you must understand, ran along the entire front of the Manor, overlooking the lawn and the rich landscape beyond. Balustrades enclosed it, and a raised parapet, some twenty feet high, elevated it above the lawn to a level with the French sash windows of the state apartments. A broad flight of handsome stone steps led from this terrace to the grounds beneath; and it was here the Jesuit stood, his every

sense bent upon listening for the intimation that his heart told him he must soon receive.

He had stayed some time, and his pulse and throbbing heart began to beat more regularly. The quiet repose of the placid scenery before him, the faint rustle of the thick foliage on the gigantic trees surrounding the lawn, the murmur of the splashing water thrown up by an antique fountain on the lake below, and the peaceful glimmer of the stars in the cloudless heaven above, gave quietude to his excited brain. Occasionally a burst of noisy revelry, proceeding from one of the adjacent apartments, broke in rudely upon the half-slumbering silence of all around; then again deep silence ensued, and Nature reigned in undisturbed harmony. After one of those peals of laughter of longer duration than usual, which seemed to be given after the breathless suspense of some desperate throw in French hazard, a door slammed as though somebody had left the room in a rage of disappointment. The Jesuit was all attention. He could hear through the open windows, as he thought, the rustle of a silk dress; it stopped in a room lower down; he heard voices, one of which he knew too well, and without hesitating, he ascended the terrace and crept noise-

lessly to the open window of the room from whence the voices proceeded. Looking through the chink of the half-opened window, he could see the tall handsome figure of Lady Ongar, her face flushed with excitement, her eyes dilated and flashing with suppressed passion, her fine bust heaving like a troubled sea. She stood erect before her once lord and master, now but the shadow of his former self. His tall figure emaciated, his far from handsome features stamped with the deep lines of sorrow and affliction; but though not handsome, there was in the expression of his face a light lustrous and calm, animating his full blue eye, that might have melted even the compassion of Lady Ongar. His fingers were entwined and thrown down before him, and he stood gazing upon his wife with a look of mingled pity, affection, and reproach.

"Martha, you have lost; you have played high, and you are ruined," said his lordship, in a quiet, subdued voice.

"Most sagacious peer, you have guessed rightly, and I have come to demand a cheque for ten thousand pounds to redeem my lost fortune, and for you to recover your ——"

"My son—but not my wife's affection. O,

Martha! what bitter tortures have I endured for you. Is it hopeless—can I never reclaim you from this worse than perdition?"

"Lord Ongar," replied the haughty lady, fixing her burning eyes full upon him, "I want none of your sentimental declamation. You heard that shout which hailed my rival, that she-wolf Lady Victor, the winner in the last main. If you are a man, or yet possess the heart of a mouse, assist your wife to take her revenge. Don't allow the world to say she had not a pound to pit against the woman who had drenched her of her gold, and then traduced her as a strumpet."

"A what, Martha! God, good and merciful, who has dared—Eh?" exclaimed the peer, dreadfully agitated, and gasping for strength to speak.

"Do not agitate yourself, my lord," continued her ladyship in a perfectly calm voice, "there is no necessity—let me alone to defend my character against my own sex; assist me with this small amount, and I will soon clear my name and my fame."

"Wife, are you so lost as to suppose that gold can ever wipe away the disgrace—the fearful insults charged against you. Were you to win back all you have lost, and hordes upon hordes on that,

till you became rich as Crœsus, you would be unworthy the name you bear, unless you proved the slanderer a liar."

"Pooh, pooh! never let that disturb you, I will arrange that hereafter. Are you prepared to assist me: shall I fetch you paper and pen, or scratch your initials for the sum it will suffice for the present."

"Never, Martha, never; there is a duty I owe to you as my wife, and I have done it to the best of my power—striven to entice you from the road you have chosen; and there is another—yes, yet one other—which—(here Lord Ongar's voice became so thick it was difficult for him to articulate) which I will likewise perform, though you have deprived me of the last boon God granted to my pilgrimage here—that will I perform, for he lives though I cannot see him, nor never may again; but it shall be his, and never go to be his mother's disgrace at a gambling table. Listen, Martha; never, never, never, shall that sum go otherwise but to my son Frederick."

"What! Frederick was the boy's name?" demanded Colonel Chorley in great perturbation.

"Yes; but what of that?" asked the Jeeuit.

"Oh nothing; only a singular coincidence. Pray proceed. I beg pardon for the interruption."

Well, her ladyship seemed to ponder for a moment over the determined denial of her husband's.

"That is your fixed and immovable determination, my lord," at last she said.

"Most undoubtedly, Martha; for what else have I suffered so long?"

"Then listen," she exclaimed, her passion rising beyond control, "you mighty peer—courageous defender of your wife's honour, and inflexible guardian of your son's fortune! I will foil you, though I sacrifice honour, life, and fame. Your son shall die, and I will accept the offer of the Earl of Beechmere and become his public mistress."

"Great God!—Ah! it's gone," exclaimed the peer, and he staggered a few paces, reeled, and fell.

The Jesuit rushed from his hiding place and shouted loudly for help, raising the prostrate lord to his knee, and undoing, as fast as possible, the cravat and waistcoat. Lady Ongar, alarmed at so sudden an attack, had bent upon one knee likewise; but it was too late, he gave a slight cough

and deluged the floor in his own blood. He sank fast. The house, alarmed, gathered round the dying peer; and his wife now held his hand to her lips. He looked up once, smiled fondly upon her, and said, almost inaudibly, "Martha, I forgive you;" and Lord Ongar was freed for ever from the troubles of this life and the tyranny of his debased wife.

"My God, Doctor," exclaimed Lord Henry, as the Jesuit concluded. "That's an awful story. What became of the she fiend?"

"She committed suicide, some months afterwards, through remorse, and the horrors she endured, having been banished society."

"And the son?" demanded the Colonel.

"It was never known; though some say the Earl could have told, in spite of his declaration of ignorance."

"Come, have another cup of coffee," continued the Jesuit, gaily, "and then I shall dispatch you to your quarters, and I must to my office of matins."

"I can comprehend now," said Lord Luton thoughtfully, "how it was Lady Ongar resented the damage done to her fawn-coloured satin."

CHAPTER VI.

DAWNING RECOLLECTIONS — THE BENEDICTINE'S FIRST MANŒUVRE—THE MYSTERIOUS RELIC—A SUCCESSFUL ELUCIDATION—THE BENEDICTINE FLIRTS—HOW FLATTERY MAKES MANY FRIENDS.

Colonel Frederick Chorley had listened to the story recited by the Provincial with the deepest attention; at first from mere curiosity to learn the particulars of a family secret in connection with those with whom he had been for many years on terms of the most cordial intimacy, and, subsequently, from motives it was difficult for him wholly to analyze. There were incidents in that narrative with which he seemed to have been previously acquainted; a preconception that the circumstances related had once been enacted before him, though veiled in a misty obscurity of doubt, now bordering upon absolute certainty, again lost in a maze of irrelevant matter. Was this that

strange phenomenon of the mind that had been termed the sentiment of pre-existence, or was it the latent reminiscences of childhood warmed into returning consciousness by the vivid description of the Jesuit? The Colonel, laying wrapt in a dressing gown on the sofa, in his small barrack-room in Hyde Park, found it difficult to give a satisfactory answer. There was some mystery, or, if not that, at least secrecy in the very early portion of his existence, which at times he had attempted himself to unravel; but had abandoned the matter from want of all knowledge of the details of his parentage. The Colonel had been given to understand by the Marquis of Rochdale, that he was the son of an officer, an old friend of his own, who had fallen on the field at Waterloo; and as proof of that assertion, he had seen that a Major Chorley was named in the list of killed upon that memorable day. Out of friendship for the deceased Major, his old Eton chum, he had adopted his orphan child, given him an university education, placed him in the profession of his father in the first regiment in the army, and by his influence had obtained his rapid promotion to a troop—the position he now held. Money had never been refused him, and he was received and treated at

Rochdale House at all times as though he was the son of its owner. The Marquis had rarely alluded to his father, and seldom spoke of anything but the present time, and his future prospects in the service. But in looking back to the very earliest period of his life there were figures which filled the few scenes he could call to mind, closely corresponding to those that enacted the drama in the Jesuit's tale. Here and there the face of a pale thin gentleman, whose features were obliterated from his remembrance, became associated with gigantic trees, under whose far spreading shade he had played in childhood, filling a small toy with fallen acorns and wheeling it to that same tall gentleman. A slight perception of another, dressed in black, who wore a long straight dress like a lady's riding habit, and who had once shown him, from a black covered book with red marginal letters in it, a picture of the regions below, and told him that was the place all naughty boys were sent to; that he had cried with fright and had been consoled by the tall, thin gentleman, and had made it up with the other in black upon the receipt of a sponge cake. This was nearly all he could discriminate from the mass of school and

college reminiscences, and the gay scenes witnessed since his entrance on the career of a soldier.

Some hours were spent in discussing the value of such evidence in his own mind, to establish any right to suppose himself the son of Lord Ongar, the recital of whose sad fate had greatly affected him; but his superior judgment soon assured him that his mind was labouring under some delusive excitement, generated no doubt by the combination of the ball, strong coffee, and the natural interest he had taken in the Jesuit's narrative.

When he arose to dress, previous to making a call upon some friends, he laughed at such sentimental ruminating; and the entrance of Lord Luton with some brother officers, who insisted upon pipes, tobacco, and some pale ale, speedily gave rise to a very different train of ideas.

We must revert now to the doings of the Rev. Benedict Copinstall, who, upon the evening of the day subsequent to the ball, we find seated in the drawing-room of Rochdale House, chatting on easy terms with the Marquis and his daughters, some half-hour before dinner was announced.

There is usually something very precise and severe in the deportment of individuals invited out to dinner. In the interim, pending the an-

nouncement by the son of Silenus, people often appear bent upon assuming the greatest possible degree of etiquette, as though the exertion of a familiar dialogue must inevitably disarrange the white cravat, or make the waistcoat explosive. Or else the ladies sit *in terrorem* of their crinoline, which might be gunpowder, and a bright sally be attended with instantaneous combustion. The young gent with whom you discussed oysters and bottled stout three hours ago, and who now, by the bye, smells abominably of tobacco (as though he had been smoking whilst dressing—the nasty fellow), has undergone a complete transition, and can only talk as though he had met you once before and that at Cremorne, and was ashamed of himself in consequence. And the blue-eyed beauty whom you flirted with in the Park averts her eyes, looks compassionate, and seems to implore you not to speak to her for mamma is present. Then some rash individual throws up a topic, like a dead pigeon, which all the company have a shot at; but being incapable of soaring it falls to the ground horribly mangled. Then a dead silence ensues, as though they regretted the fact of not being able to make more of it; look towards the door, and at the unique or-molu clock on the man-

telpiece; wish dinner would be announced, or the wealthy snob that detains it had his money bags tied round his neck at the bottom of the Atlantic.

Mr. Copinstall was evidently perfectly independent of this disagreeable suspense, and though no visitor but himself was present he was enabled to sustain a lively and incessant run of conversation. Conversation, that is to say a various assortment of club and drawing-room small talk, constituted his peculiar *forte*, and he rarely let slip an opportunity of indulging it. In this respect the Benedictine had frequently incurred the censure of the more astute Provincial; inasmuch that amidst the superfluity of such requisite covering to his real object, he failed to implant the germ of religious conversion, which would hereafter form the commencement of a shaft that was never to be relinquished until the good work was complete.

"I am very much afraid, Mr. Copinstall," said Lady Charlotte, the first opportunity she had of conversing alone with the worthy gentleman, "that I greatly committed myself yesterday evening with a gentleman of your religion; no other than the Jesuit Provincial!"

"Ah, indeed!" said Mr. Copinstall, "I hope the result was not disagreeable to your ladyship?"

"Why no; he took it very good naturedly; much more so than I deserved. At the same time at the moment it gave me great annoyance, and will make me more guarded for the future in the manner I allude to religion or its prejudices."

"Might I enquire the nature of the supposed mishap, because I think I have already heard something of the matter."

"With reference to the Madona of Raphael's."

"Yes; he was telling me of it; and we laughed heartily at the settler you gave him. Ha! ha! it was certainly, he declared, the best nonplus he had ever received. Your ladyship has the satisfaction to know you silence one of the most indefatigable Jesuits of the day. Quite a theologian already."

"Excuse me, Mr. Copinstall," said Lady Charlotte, not perfectly understanding the drift of the compliment he was paying her, "but I can only take credit for my deserts; and those are, having said a rude thing from thoughtlessness, and its merit, of being classed as an intolerant and bigoted person, which I am not. I know very little, scarce anything of the Catholic faith but from hearsay and prejudices, therefore I had no right to make the assertion I did. Now will you explain that to Mr. Dilworth?"

"If it is your ladyship's pleasure I shall be most happy to do so; though I can assure you such an explanation is quite unnecessary."

"Well, and now I wish to ask you a question. Are Catholics in the habit of carrying mementos of their faith about with them?"

Mr. Copinstall endeavoured to fathom the motive of this question, by fixing his small gray eyes upon the face of his querist, but could elicit nothing from thence, save the settled air of a determined spirit, which dwelt at all times so conspicuously upon Lady Charlotte's features. After the fashion of a cautious man, who can never answer a straight forward question in a straight-forward manner, he gave a doubtful reply, which left an ample escape-hole.

"I believe some of them do, though the majority of English Catholics place less veneration in such things than their continental brethren. A miraculous medal, or small Agnus Dei, are the most popular among them."

"Would you deem it an impertinent question if I asked you whether *you* wear any of them?"

This was a home thrust, but Mr. Copinstall parried it.

"I wear the badge of my order," he replied,

and showed her a small silver cross, marked with the I.H.S., attached by a narrow ribbon to his neck.

"Thank you; it is very pretty. Do the Jesuits wear a similar badge?"

"No; they wear the scapula, a small square banner, embroidered with the initials of the Society, and a glorified heart."

"They do not wear likewise a miniature of the Virgin?"

"I never heard of their doing so; indeed I think it highly improbable they would."

"It forms no rule of their order?"

"Certainly not."

"Well, now to be candid, and not perplex you longer with such blind questions, I will tell you of rather a curious incident that occurred last night when leaving the ball at Devonshire House. As I passed out I felt something strike cold to my chest, it quite startled me, it came so sudden, I could not conceive what it was until I returned home, when I discovered it to be this, placed in my bosom by some unknown hand."

Lady Charlotte here unfolded her handkerchief and presented Mr. Copinstall with a small elliptically formed miniature of the Virgin, most exqui-

sitely copied on ivory from the Madona she had so admired in the ball-room. The effort of the artist to reproduce the work of the great master had been eminently successful, and must have been the performance of a glorious painter; besides which it was magnificently set in pearls and rubies, and cased in fretted gold: on the whole it formed a present worthy the acceptance of a Madame de Maintenon from the Grand Monarque. Mr. Copinstall expressed in his countenance unfeigned surprise; he was both astonished and perplexed for the moment.

"You seem as much surprised as I was myself, Mr. Copinstall."

"Indeed, madam, the manner of your coming possessed of this is past my comprehension. Who could have dared such a liberty?"

"I would pardon the liberty, as the present is really so beautiful, if I could discover the donor. Cannot you assist me to elucidate the mystery?" replied Lady Charlotte, looking into Mr. Copinstall's face with a peculiar meaning, which the reverend gentleman observed, though his eyes were apparently still bent in examining the miniature.

"As you left the grand entrance, you were first

conscious of having received it. Who, may I ask, was present at the time?"

"Why, there were many, for the ball was breaking up rapidly, and our carriage had drawn up. Papa was just before me, Colonel Chorley and Lord Luton by my side, and, if I mistake not, Mr. Dilworth was conversing with Henry Luton."

"And your suspicions, taken in conjunction with your *rencontre* before the original of this beautiful copy, revert, I presume, to the latter?"

"You have guessed correctly."

"And, your ladyship, never more unjustly."

"Why so?"

"Because Mr. Dilworth is utterly incapable of it. I can assure you, madam, such an action would be deemed highly incorrect by him in his character as a clergyman, as it would be a piece of gross impertinence in any one not intimately acquainted with you."

"Well, then, I am utterly at a loss to conceive who it could have been."

"I am afraid I am almost at as great a loss, unless your ladyship knows of any individual who would adopt such a method of presenting you with so remarkable a subject for a memento."

"How remarkable, Mr. Copinstall. I do not comprehend your meaning."

"If your ladyship will reflect, there is more intended in this that the mere ornament of an exquisite miniature. Look at it again."

"I understand you, sir, now perfectly," replied Lady Charlotte, her countenance suffused in a moment with the deepest crimson, and a glance in her proud eyes, which made Mr. Copinstall feel anxious for the result.

"I am afraid your ladyship is displeased," said the Benedictine in a repentant voice; "but you do not clearly comprehend my meaning yet."

"Sufficiently so, Mr. Copinstall, to assure you that the party who caused me to receive this, is greatly mistaken in the ideas he entertains. I perfectly comprehend his pitiful manœuvre now, and thank you for the assistance you have given me; rest assured I will deliver this to my father on the first opportunity, explaining every thing to him."

"As your ladyship may think best; but before doing so, do you not think it better to discover the person who assumed such a liberty?"

"How can I do so, sir?" demanded Lady Charlotte, with the greatest asperity.

"By reflection, madam," replied the priest in a determined voice. There was that in the bold tone in which this was expressed, which gave her pleasure, though it were difficult to define its precise cause, save that her own ardent spirit derived gratification in meeting another which accorded with it. It was no natural qualification of the Benedictine's, but the very reverse; though his intimate knowledge of the female character, under its different guises, induced him to assume a position in which he was uncomfortable, and destitute of self-reliance long to maintain.

"Perhaps, with the aid of your superior wisdom, Mr. Copinstall," said Lady Charlotte with her usual soft voice and placid smile, "with the faculty of discernment for which the members of your society are so remarkable, pressed into my service, I may succeed."

"Your ladyship may command my best endeavours."

"Is there any individual you can suggest to my memory?"

"I have only known your ladyship, I regret to say, but a few days, consequently am almost ignorant of your most intimate friends; but is there no one, madam, whom your own heart can single

from the rest, as being more likely to assume a liberty of this description; the more so, your ladyship, when you cannot urge ignorance as to the existence of some tendencies of his towards a religion that holds in its creed a high veneration for the original of that beautiful miniature."

Lady Charlotte bent her head over a small bead purse which she had been netting during this conversation; the warm blood had mounted to her very brow, and spread itself over her ivory neck, long before Mr. Copinstall had done speaking. She looked quelled, overpowered, if not inwardly stricken with a blow as unexpected as it was cruel; there was one pearly tear gathering on her eyelash, which she suffered to remain, but when she raised her face to the Benedictine's, it was full of love, tenderness, and calm resignation, while the stern traits it usually assumed seemed for the moment fused in a look of imploring sorrow.

"Your ladyship," said the Benedictine, with a look of something like compassion for the emotion which he had caused, "your ladyship must bear in mind this is only my suggestion; I have nothing to found it upon but the facts you have given me; if, however, your own heart concurs in that

suggestion, I have only to implore your pardon for the pain such a revelation has occasioned you."

Lady Charlotte nodded acquiescence, and again bent over her work, and Mr. Copinstall rose from the seat he had retained opposite to her, and went to another window recess where Lady Flora was chatting with her father.

" Mr. Copinstall," said Flora, in the usual bantering strain she was so fond of indulging in, " have you concluded Charlotte's confession ?"

" Flora, my dear," interposed the Marquis, " your observation is barely polite, much less respectful."

" Oh ! papa," replied the fair banterer, " Mr. Copinstall told me before dinner, he possessed such an amount of placidity it was impossible to discompose him ; now I intend to try."

" By all means proceed to do so your ladyship ; though remember, I must reserve for myself certain weapons of *defence*. It would be cowardly of course to act on the offensive with a lady."

" Well, then, tell me the nature of that interesting communication you and Cha have had together."

" Oh ! but that would be revealing the secrets of confession."

"She has been to confession, then; and much she needs it."

"So you say; though I question whether your ladyship would incur a less penance than your sister."

"Ah! you would not be half so indulgent to poor me."

"That rests entirely upon the state of your conscience. I am afraid you are an old offender."

"O! what a rude man. I beg your pardon, but really your judgment is coming before my confession."

"Probably I have reasons for believing that confession already known to me."

"Indeed! Pray tell me, and if you are right I will acknowledge it."

At this moment the servant entered, and acquainted the Marquis that Colonel Chorley was in the library waiting to see him.

"Why did he not come up stairs?" demanded the Marquis.

"I asked him, my lord, but he declined, saying he wished to see your lordship privately;" with which the Marquis preceded the lackey from the room.

"Cha," called Lady Flora to her sister, "what

can the Colonel want with papa so late in the evening."

"A division in the House, perhaps."

"Nonsense; papa votes by proxy; you know that."

"Well, some important discussion in the Commons."

"Very unlikely, for Edward told me they counted out at four, and I don't think they ever sit again the same evening. Do they, sir? Ah! what are you looking so droll about?"

"They never sit again the same evening, your ladyship, after once being counted out," replied the Benedictine, with a smile.

"My dear Flora, your observations are really quite disrespectful," said Lady Charlotte from her seat.

"Sister Cha, you have had your confession over in peace, pray grant the same indulgence to mine," answered her sister.

"Mr. Copinstall, what were you smiling for, then, in such a peculiarly meaning manner?"

"At a name that was mentioned," replied Mr. Copinstall.

"Do you know the object of the Colonel's visit then," said Flora, sinking her voice to a whisper.

"Tell me, that's a good man; I will keep it all to myself."

"I do not, I can assure you, or I should certainly gratify such a reasonable desire with pleasure."

"It was not Chorley's name I believed you smiled at. No," said Flora, with a sudden impulse, "it was the name I mentioned. Ah! you sly man, have I not guessed correctly?"

"Your ladyship is ever correct."

"Good gracious, what a thing to have said to me, who never did anything, or said anything yet in my life that I was not blamed for; but do you know to whom I alluded?"

"How is it possible, your ladyship, when I am acquainted with some score of Edwards; nor would I for the world attempt to guess your secret."

"Because I believe you know who it was I meant, there is such a conscious look upon your face at this moment."

The Benedictine laughed heartily, which amused the lady the more.

"Now tell me the name," begged Flora.

"Edward Plantagenet Multravers, commonly called Viscount Lenham."

"You are a perfect necromancer, verily I believe so. Do you keep a black cat at home, Mr. Copinstall?"

"No; but a pretty tortoiseshell."

"What was it that amused you so much in that name?"

"Nothing very particular, madam, only something he said to me as I came here this afternoon."

"What then you are acquainted?" exclaimed Flora, opening her large blue eyes in surprise.

"Yes; I have repeatedly met him, and a more agreeable young nobleman I never encountered."

"I am glad to hear you speak so well of him. Pray do you know Lord Henry Luton?"

"From his childhood. I met him likewise as I came hither."

"But not with Edward."

"Yes, with *Edward*," laying peculiar stress upon the name.

"I am surprised!" exclaimed Lady Flora, turning her eyes toward the street.

"I hope I have not divulged a conspiracy," observed the priest with assumed concern.

"Oh no! nothing but that I can remedy; though I am delighted to think I have discovered it."

"And you feel rewarded for your confession?"

"I have not made any, have I? I see you are a fisher. Well, never mind, you won't betray me, will you?"

"Never, while I have breath."

"Thank you; that was very prettily said. Who would take you for a Catholic priest, those strangely dressed, demure looking men, who always seem to me as though they were thinking over the worst confessions they have heard for the last year. I notice no singularity in you, except that you are a nice pleasant man?"

"Flattery from your ladyship is dangerous to my vanity, which, like a liver complaint, is excited to greater power by the things we have the strongest partiality for. But you see I am not only a priest but absolutely a monk?"

"A monk; where is your robe, your cowl, and the cloister?"

"Relinquished to do what good I can in the world."

"And a far more sensible resolution; only be careful ——"

"Of what, madam. Such a pair of lovely orbs as Lady Flora Ongar's? I think I am proof."

Flora looked up to him with a glance so be-

witching as to incline the *soi-disant* monk to recant his assertion, but the Marquis now re-entered, and shortly afterwards Mr. Copinstall rose to depart. As he approached Lady Charlotte's seat in the window recess, which was at the extreme end of the room, she rose gracefully and extended her hand.

"You will keep my confidence," she said, in a soft low tone.

"When it should please your ladyship to repose that favor in me, you may rely upon my doing so implicitly: as yet I have not the honor of such a privilege."

"Well, as you will," she answered, smiling gaily, and with a cordial pressure of the hand Mr. Copinstall bowed his *congé*.

This was a final *chef-d'œuvre* of Mr. Copinstall's on that memorable evening; for to a proud spirit like Lady Charlotte's, nothing could have proved a more genial balm than the knowledge that she had not been drawn out to divulge secrets that lived only in her own breast; and the assurance of the priest, that he had observed nothing not intended he should note, raised him high in her estimation. The little *parle* with Flora had not been useless, as may be judged from the few words interchanged after his departure.

"I don't think, papa," said Lady Flora, "I ever met any gentleman of Mr. Copinstall's age I admired more. He is so good tempered and pleasant, so amusing, and without that foppery we so often see in old bachelors in society."

"He is not only that, Flora," replied Lady Charlotte, "but he is a most estimable gentleman and an excellent Christian."

Mr. Copinstall, let me assure the reader, was not less satisfied with himself than were either of the ladies. "Let Dilworth beat that," he soliloquized as he paced rapidly home, "let him beat that, with all his double evolutions of tact and secondary resources; nothing like working the game with your own master hand, nothing like being present yourself to steer the cause." And with this comfortable reflection Mr. Copinstall steered home to bed.

CHAPTER VII.

PROGRESS OF THE PLOT—A JESUIT'S VALUE OF MORAL OBLIGATIONS—STARTLING DISCLOSURE—THE COLONEL'S MYSTERY—THE JESUIT'S ATTRAPOIRE—SECRET SPRINGS OF THE PERVERTER—MIRACULOUS SAINTS—THE REMORSELESS PRIESTHOOD.

THE first manœuvre, slight as it may have been in its results, had proved highly encouraging to the Jesuit and the Benedictine in their efforts towards the conversion of Lady Charlotte. Mr. Dilworth was perfectly conscious that if an invading army would acquire speedy conquest one victory must be rapidly followed up by another, and delay beyond that which is prudent entails certain defeat; and in order to avoid such a catastrophe, his measures from this date assumed a bolder and more direct purpose. The timidity of Mr. Copinstall, a less skilled casuist, though as clever a convoluter of circumstances, would have waited until the united influence of their intimacy with the victim had

gradually undermined the tenets of her faith; but such prosaic methods were not palatable to the Jesuit, whose interest could never be enlisted in any case that did not present almost insurmountable difficulties to be overcome, and needed the most intact display of religious diplomacy and intrigue to effect the grand object in view. Mr. Copinstall would have toiled years upon years to bore through the obstructing rock. Mr. Dilworth bored his mine, and waited with lighted match the moment most favourable to blow it up.

But the difficulties were, upon consideration, somewhat appalling, and the danger was eminent, that when the mine exploded the shock might shake away their own substratum and involve everybody in a common ruin. To be more explicit. Supposing that they were so far successful as to induce Lady Charlotte to adopt the Catholic religion, they had then only half completed the task. How was she, when the violent opposition of her friends had reached its climax, to be inveigled into the walls of a convent? By what means, even allowing her own sanction attained, were they to overcome the objections of the Marquis, spurred on by the reproach of his friends both private and political? And, lastly, how sever

the attachment which they were convinced strongly subsisted between the peer's daughter and the captain of the Guards? It was impossible to succeed without blinding every individual concerned by a train of the most subtle artifices, and playing to an extraordinary degree upon such circumstances as the real qualities of the case permitted them to grasp, though by the very nature of these circumstances it was easily to be seen that ten minutes reciprocal explanation between the parties concerned, would mar the plot for ever, and bring everlasting disgrace upon the trepanners. But it frequently occurs that plans or intrigues, the most simple in their formation, are seldom so easily discernible to those victimized by them as more crafty and cunningly devised plots. Deep water is known to run smooth, and the wanderer instinctively avoids the snare; but when it glides lightly over pebbled sand the assurance is established by the confirmation of the eyes; yet nevertheless that shallow water may be running over a quicksand. Upon this Mr. Dilworth and his coadjutor trusted, together with their own endeavours to keep the parties from any mutual explanation.

It may appear strange that a person of the

Provincial's standing in his order should incur the risk of so much for the acquirement of one convert. But it is the practice of the Jesuits to mark their game and pursue it. If the consequences are a serious involvment for poaching, they get out of it as their wits may best devise; if expulsion comes (as it invariably does after a certain lapse of years, when the cup of their guilt is full), they retire; but it is only to plot political machinations for their restoration. In the present instance Mr. Dilworth saw the results which must ensue by the secession of one so high, and the precedent it would establish for others, less high, who were then wavering in their stability to the established faith.

There was another characteristic in the proceeding which may be termed the idiosyncracy of the Catholic priesthood, one which in its strange interpretation of religious precept and evasion of moral rectitude has not its equal in the many denominations into which Christianity is subdivided. Whatever the schemes laid down for the attainment of an object, which in their estimation may prove beneficial to the creed—no matter whether they involve the misery or happiness of the parties concerned, or the greatest dereliction from probity and truth—

are sanctioned, and no longer reprehensible in the individuals employing them: so that where it would be dishonest and sinful to cajole a man out of his wealth, or influence him to the unhappiness of another, in an ordinary affair of life, ceases to be so when the purposes of Catholicism require it for her advancement and general benefit. We are told strategy in war and love is at all times fair. The Jesuits extend the aphorism to religion: but as religion bears a very equivocal connection to the laws of things temporal, we are not prepared to say upon what ground they hold it to be justifiable. That the ties of honor, love, and moral obligations, are but a dead letter when brought into contact with the propagation of Catholicity, we have had many opportunities of observing, and facts are not wanting to substantiate the charge.

It was late in the afternoon that the *tête-à-tête* conference held by Mr. Dilworth and the Benedictine, relative to the course to be adopted towards effecting their grand object, broke up.

"There is no reason, as far as I can see, Copinstall, for getting nervous about untoward results," said the Jesuit, rising to ring the bell. "If we stand appalled at so early a stage of the undertaking, what will become of us at a later period,

when our utmost energies will be required to carry us through. Trust in God. He never fails to aid those who labour for his glory; and you will see the result will answer our expectations."

The servant here attended to the summons.

"The carriage, James, as quickly as possible."

The man disappeared, and Mr. Copinstall remained sunk in a regretful contemplation of the work he now almost began to regret having ever proposed.

That afternoon a stream of carriages were rattling past Hyde Park Corner towards the Richmond road, filled with the elegant creatures who, bedecked in the delicate hues of summer dress, were hastening to adorn a fête, given that they might recruit the fading roses on their cheeks, by a lounge under forest trees girting the silver Thames. Rank and beauty were spread over the ducal lawn, or sauntered in the deep shade of the pleasure grounds, their stately figures grouped in merry parties, making a noble foreground to the wide expanding landscape, or dotting the chequered avenue with the exquisite delicacy of their more than human forms. There was no galaxy of resplendant magnificence decking nature with the apocryphal embellishments of art, but all seemed to blend them-

selves with the seclusion of the spot, and to become mingled with the rich and noble prospect that lay in a gleamy light of sunshine spread at their feet. Here grace and loveliness seemed no studied picture wrought to idealty that it might assimilate itself with the work of art, but formed only a gentle feature in the chosen garden of nature, where she had planted her fairest gems and reposed her most faultless beauties. Aerial crafts, like fairy nautili, floated on the still bosom of the winding river, their oars flashing in the sunshine and their snow-white sails flapping in the drowsy breeze. The swelling symphony of the military band mingled with the hum of the insect world, and rose and fell in the soft cadences of sweetest harmony. The concourse gathered fast and the grounds became animated with the thronging of the guests, and the busy murmur of voices rose in distant parts and filled the secluded bowers.

A line of five or six ladies, supported in the rear and flanked by an equal number of gentlemen, paraded a long avenue overtopped by majestic elms. They were gaily chatting over some reminiscence of a past fête, and deriving amusement from the story its recollections engendered. An opposite

party coming down the avenue, of superior strength to their own, rendered it necessary the line should give way. Some proceeded, after they had met, with distant bows to only half-recognized acquaintances; others stayed to exchange greetings with well-known friends. One of those who tarried was Lady Charlotte Ongar.

"We are such strangers that I had nearly passed by," she said, giving her hand to a tall handsome man with luxuriant mustachoes.

"No fault of mine, I can assure you," replied Colonel Chorley.

"What is your excuse, sir?"

"Duty, madam, a tyrant which has enslaved me the past ten days."

"Duty! and to what or whom, may I ask?"

"My profession."

"Well, then, your performance of those duties does not seem to have agreed with your health, you are looking wretchedly ill."

"Is it the case? I am not aware of it myself."

"Give me your arm; now that I have discovered you I must retain you by physical force, my moral influence seems to have grown weak of late. Frederick what is it that makes you ill?"

"Upon my word, Cha, you perplex me," an-

swered the Colonel, placing her slight hand under his arm and leading her down a bye-path. "I cannot account for my ill-looks: and for my absence, the regiment, you are aware, marched to Windsor early in the week. Since that I have led a squadron through one brigade day, and exercised it on sundry other occasions; duties not so excessively arduous, you will perceive, as seriously to affect my constitution."

"How was it you did not call to say adieu before you left for Windsor?"

"Certainly I did wait upon your noble father."

"And why not upon his daughters?"

"Because I understood you had company, and I was hurried for time."

"Now I have heard your excuses, Frederick, and not *one* of them will I accept, but insist upon your telling me the reason of this change both in your conduct and appearance," demanded the fair one, assuming that determined expression of countenance oftentimes familiar to her, when not satisfied in her own mind as to the meaning of another.

"Strange girl—most unsparing syren—what can I say to satisfy you more than urge such reasonable excuses."

"Reasonable, no doubt, but not satisfactory. I have known you too long not to understand you better than you would have me."

"No; not than I would have you, Charlotte, but as I would have you remain for the present."

"Then you acknowledge your excuses have no merit."

"It were useless to deny it to you."

"Quite so: tell me the true ones."

"I cannot, Cha, not at present; wait yet awhile and you shall know all."

"But you *shall*, sir. You shall tell me now."

The Colonel looked upon the rigid features of his companion—so fair, so beautiful, yet so unyielding, so resolute—with an expression of the deepest regret; as though he recalled a period not far distant when he could admire them with thoughts far different to the present.

"Charlotte, I tell you that after the lapse of a few days, or at the most a week, I will tell you."

"Now, Frederick, if you ever knew me, or ever cared to observe the tendency of my mind, you know I cannot submit to be mystified. I have been hitherto, from the time you returned from college, your confidante in everything: let me know who or what has shaken that feeling between

us? I care not whether it were but an hour before you told me all, I would not wait. When estrangement grows up between two who were once united every moment increases the peril of a final separation."

"A final separation," murmured the officer between his teeth, as though he had his fate there and was grinding it. "Estrangement, Cha! God forbid there should ever be that between two such old friends as you and I: but when a man has been basking in the luxury of a prince, and he is called away to meet many hardships do you not think it wise for him to undergo some intermediate self-denial by way of preparing himself for it?"

"You speak in parables; I cannot comprehend your allusion."

"Do you not think I have been leading a very delightful life for some years past?"

"Upon my word, sir, you are the best judge; but you seem to have found a new delight in tantalizing me."

"Well, Cha, I am conscious-stricken, and am going to reform."

"By turning a Roman Catholic?" ventured her ladyship, drawing in her lips at the last word.

"I might have done that but a little time ago,

could I have got a certain fair monitor to join me."

"Well, sir."

"Well, *now* I am not going to do so; but I am going to do something else, perhaps, more sensible."

"And what may that be pray?"

"I am going to exchange, and proceed to India."

"Frederick!" exclaimed Lady Charlotte, turning deadly pale, and trembling so violently that the Colonel was glad to lead her to a rustic couch, but the spasm seemed to be but momentary, and she soon recovered her self-possession, though her blanched cheeks, and the fixed muscles of her face, seemed to indicate that a severe mental strife was working within.

"Charlotte, from my heart I ask your pardon for speaking so lightly of my approaching departure; but, fool that I was, I thought it the best method of breaking it to you."

"Take no notice of me, I shall be quite myself in a few moments; but let me know the reason of this sudden resolution."

"Charlotte, you must take pity on a poor devil who was never placed in such a fearful position as

I am. I cannot tell you the cause, I am bound by my word never to reveal it; but listen to the reason. From the time I became conscious of a feeling beyond that of a schoolboy's—when I was just emerging into the character of a man, and was under the guardianship of our—your father —I had commenced to love you. Since that time I have never ceased to make you my counsellor and sister, nor to think of you otherwise than as a being who was created to be my good angel through life. Where others felt harshness, I experienced your kindness; what the world said was a cold, austere nature, I knew and felt to be but the mark of a sweet and gentle disposition. I never had an ambition, nor yet a hope, distinct from you; and but one fear, and that has constrained me from telling you what I now feel long ago. It was the fear that my position was not suitable to one who might expect higher rank; —not that I believed you made that an object, but your father might—you were yet young, and I deemed it more befitting the character of my position to withhold making advancements, which you might have subsequently regretted ever having encouraged. But that I loved you as ardently as a man can love a woman, I pledge my honour and

my life. Now, Cha, you see the light in which you have stood to me, hitherto; and when I tell you that something has arisen which has placed an insurmountable barrier between us, you may imagine my reason for avoiding you, at least, for a time. That bar to my only chance of happiness has created in me a different character; yet my affection for you is not changed, more than the love I felt towards you must for evermore remain that of a brother to a fond sister. No small degree of the pain I have endured arose from the fact, that I was bound never to reveal the cause of this revulsion in my hopes to any living soul; nor would I, for you will be happier far in ignorance of it; but as I can no longer live the same happy life with the same bright prospects before me, I prefer going on active service, and thus serve my country if I cannot benefit myself."

Lady Charlotte remained silent a few seconds after he had ceased speaking, her large eyes fixed upon the distant horizon, as though she could read there the secret her lover had consigned to his own breast. At length she said, in a soft gentle voice, "If I followed the rule prescribed, Frederick, by society, for persons situated as I am, I should tell you that whatever your own feelings may have been

mine did not reciprocate them; and were I the cold, stern character, affixed to me by those towards whom I choose to show it, I should probably satirize your present explanation and crush the manly pride which dictated it. But I am thus far independent of constraint, that I will tell you, I both did and do love you better than any man breathing; and that this obstacle, whatever it may be, which divides us in this life, I deplore as deeply as yourself. If you are bound not to reveal it I cannot press you to tell me, but I believe most firmly that it must be indeed insurmountable, or you would never have admitted its interference to our affection. I feel no distrust of your motives, no jealousy that you have found superior attractions elsewhere; I know your noble heart too well ever to believe you would adopt a paltry subterfuge to preserve your character in my eyes. Rest assured that in all circumstances, whatever they may be, I will ever remain to you such as I have ever been; and here is the hand of your sister as a pledge."

The Colonel raised that hand to his lips, as a devotee might the hand of its idol, and there was a silent tear, forced by the bitterness of his present regrets, left upon it. He had scarce replaced her hand by her side ere voices were heard close upon

them; and Lady Flora Ongar and Lady Redhaven turned the corner, accompanied by several gentlemen, among whom the Jesuit Provincial and the Benedictine were conspicuous.

Whatever conjectures the intruding party may have inwardly experienced in observing the pallor of Lady Charlotte's countenance, and the knitted brow and troubled features of the officer, good breeding forced them to keep their sentiments unexpressed; yet had any one watched the anxious glances interchanged by Mr. Dilworth and his coadjutor, they might have comprehended that the interview was, in their opinion, fraught with no good to them or their schemes. But this was dispelled so soon as Mr. Copinstall advanced and received a cordial recognition from Lady Charlotte, and the Colonel shook, with easy intimacy, the proffered hand of the Jesuit.

"Lady Charlotte," said Lady Redhaven, advancing towards her, "what untoward combination of chances have prevented our meeting so very seldom this season? I declare I have frequently fixed my eye upon you and endeavoured to reach you, at, I cannot say how many balls and routes, yet somebody has always interrupted me and I have lost you."

"I might almost say precisely the same words, dear Lady Redhaven; for often as we have called upon each other we were not destined to meet; and in balls and these fêtes one is scarce able to nod to half the friends you meet.

"Well, now we *have* met, grant me the favour of a short chat. You are looking fatigued and faint, let me show you a crystal fount not far from hence, containing such delicious water that it would captivate a Narcissus."

"The day is oppressive, and I do feel really inclined for a glass of water, could it be obtained without going far."

The two ladies, arm-in-arm, passed away from the remainder of the group, who were busy discussing a disputed question in botany; and after crossing some crowded avenues, passed into a narrow path that shortly opened upon a small circle, in the midst of which stood a crystal fountain of classic elegance, throwing up its *jets d'eau* of clearest water into a rich shell receiver. From one of the unique drinking cups Lady Charlotte imbibed the restoring draught, and was so far refreshed that her conversation became animated if not gay.

"I was delighted to hear of the providential

escape you had a few weeks ago," said Lady Redhaven, after they had seated themselves; "and still more so, in thinking my dear good friend, Mr. Copinstall, should have been so near to render you assistance. Does it not seem, Lady Charlotte, almost a special interposition of Almighty God?"

"Indeed, as far as the fracture of my limbs was concerned, it really was; but for Mr. Copinstall I should have been severely injured."

Lady Redhaven gazed upon the beautiful countenance of the speaker with an expression, in her own angelic face, strongly marked with compassion and regret that her ladyship did not view the circumstance in the light she intended.

"And, if I mistake not, Lady Charlotte, dear Mr. Copinstall has been so greatly honoured as to become a constant visitor at Rochdale House."

"Yes; and a more pleasing and sensible man I would not wish to see there. He is a great favourite with us all; and papa, whom you know is strongly averse to the faith he is a most excellent member of, really appreciates his society and delights in his conversation."

"The Marquis is, I think, Charlotte, less bigoted than he was wont to be."

"Bigoted he never was; but I think, with your

ladyship, he is more liberal than he was wont on the score of religious opinion."

"I am delighted to hear it."

"And I so far rejoice because it enables me to show my preserver such attention as his services demand."

"I hope he will soon obtain a footing in your good opinion quite independent of that—one grounded upon the score of his own merits."

"He has done so already," replied Lady Charlotte, with emphasis; "and I esteem him for his good sense and delicacy of feeling."

"O, my dear Lady Charlotte, I can assure you you only do him common justice. You may think me a partial judge, but I can never express to you one half the consolation and benefit I have derived from that holy man. There is a saintly simplicity, a placid uninterrupted harmony of true religion in that man's soul, which diffuses its peace to all who consult him. As a Catholic, though a very indifferent one, believe me, I value him as the gem of my faith."

"Well, you see I am not a Catholic yet, so I suppose I cannot be admitted to experience these delightful qualities; yet, nevertheless, I can easily comprehend you, and the happiness you derive from

so excellent a man being your adviser. He is your confessor, I presume?"

"No; not my confessor."

"Indeed! I should have conceived so many amiable qualities would have recommended him."

"No, I never confess but to a Jesuit, if it is possible to obtain one."

"A Jesuit! the very last person I should ever think of opening my mind to."

"Why so, may I ask?" enquired Lady Redhaven, laughingly, as though amused at the prejudices entertained by her companion.

"They are such deceptive, designing men, imbued with the worst opinion of their fellow creatures, whom they only look upon as puppets for their controul."

"My dear, dear Lady Charlotte," replied the Catholic peeress, arching her fine eyebrows and placing her hand upon that of her friend, at the same time smiling, "do not permit, I pray you, such antiquated bigotry to possess your mind, naturally endowed with a sense very superior to the generality of girls of our station in life. You are now expressing the cant of Exeter Hall, or the opinions raging in the days of Titus Oates, not the

liberal sentiments of a well-informed woman of this age of religious tolerance."

"If I did I am very sorry for displaying such ignorance," replied Lady Charlotte, laughing with her friend; "but really, my dear madam, I have ever been used thus to esteem the Order of Jesuits."

"O I know it, my dear child. The Protestant divines, finding themselves surpassed by the brilliant talents of the Order, have recourse to slander in the hope of rendering their powerful arguments unavailing. Did you ever converse with a Jesuit, Charlotte?"

"Yes, dear, I really did, and that not very long ago, when I had the honour of insulting him to his face," replied Lady Charlotte, covering her face with her handkerchief to controul her laughter.

"My dear girl, what can you mean? Where, how, and when did you meet one?" eagerly enquired her ladyship.

"O me, I was really very sorry for it; but I will tell you exactly how it occurred." And Lady Charlotte repeated the nature of the conversation held with the Provincial before the Madona of Devonshire House.

"And so you declared us all idolaters, and in-

cluded the reverend gentleman in the category," said Lady Redhaven, at the conclusion of the recital.

"Well, but I saved myself by recanting in favour of all respectable and educated Catholics; and, moreover, I sent an apology by Mr. Copinstall."

"You have done more than sufficient, dear, to satisfy the choler of Mr. Dilworth, worthy, excellent man," replied Lady Redhaven. "It is this same gentleman who is my confessor."

"Impossible! I was not aware he heard confessions; so Mr. Copinstall gave us to understand."

"Only a select few, and I am one of that privileged number."

"And you like him as such of course."

"Most supremely; he is so gentle, so explicit, and if a doubt ever occurs in your mind he will explain it to you in a manner that is at once simple and satisfactory. I will confess to you, at times the nervousness of my confessor has frequently perplexed me; but since I have adopted the Provincial I have never had a moment's uneasiness."

"It must be a very great happiness to you, Lady Redhaven."

"Indeed you speak correctly. Are you aware, my dear Lady Charlotte, that Mr. Dilworth was intimately acquainted with your aunt? I discovered it the other day in ordinary conversation."

"No I was not, madam," replied Lady Charlotte, every feature of her countenance expressing great distaste, and something like surprise for the allusion to a subject of which she only knew enongh to render it highly disagreeable to hear it mentioned by the lips of a stranger."

"Pardon me; I allude to your favourite aunt, Lady Charlotte Ongar."

"What! my darling aunt," exclaimed the young lady, almost springing from her seat. "Is it possible he knew her abroad! O do tell me."

"I am unable to give you any particulars, my dear child," replied Lady Redhaven, "as he only made allusion to it in passing conversation, but he mentioned having attended her on her death-bed."

"At her death!" reiterated her ladyship. "Is it possible that it can be the case. O! what joy if he is enabled to recount to me her last hours on earth. Do, my dear Lady Redhaven, give me a friendly introduction to him, that I may question him concerning it."

"I shall be most delighted to do that, my dear;

and if you feel inclined, we will endeavour to find him at once."

"Certainly, nothing could be better; we shall scarcely fail to miss him."

"Yet stay," exclaimed Lady Redhaven, musing to herself with a thoughtful countenance, "I am afraid it would be more prudent to defer it; the gardens are rather too public a place for a *tête-à-tête* with the Provincial of Jesuits and the eldest daughter of Lord Rochdale; but I will arrange your meeting him at my house on an early day, and will let you know."

Lady Charlotte reluctantly acquiesced to this proposed amendment; her eagerness to learn the particulars she had oftentimes endeavoured to attain, but ill brooking an hour's delay; yet the afterthought of her *chaperone* she immediately comprehended was a wise one. Perhaps had the real intentions of the peeress been sifted, the prudent forbearance she evinced would have displayed a tact not altogether unworthy the appellation of Jesuitism. The natural disposition of Lady Redhaven was one so free from artifice, so devoid of chicanery, and so little qualified to study the internal workings of beguilement employed by the Order of Jesus, that the present undertaking,

which had been dictated to her by the Provincial, had surpassed her most sanguine conception of success. She had performed all that was required for the present of her—faithfully enacted the first dialogue which it was prescribed she should maintain, when requisite, through the piece devoted to the conversion and cloistering of Lady Charlotte Ongar. It would have been difficult to discern in what the qualifications of Lady Redhaven consisted, that had induced the Provincial to select her as a fitting instrument to play the decoy. None so artless or right-minded as her; none holding a greater abhorrence of deceit, or would have scorned participation in a fraud with such unqualified contempt; who would have looked upon the miserable subterfuge adopted by the Jesuit to reclaim the peer's daughter from heresy as a sacrilege, a violation of the great works of the Redeemer, an impious sacrifice to the Almighty: and in this uncompromising veracity, Mr. Dilworth saw the materials for his handicraft. Where his implements knew not the purposes for which they were employed, how could the objects of his workmanship detect the hand which bent her as he would have her bend? Lady Redhaven was beyond suspicion; she held a name esteemed by

Protestants as well as Catholics for piety, liberality, and universal charity; and under such a cover, he could direct the shafts of his policy without appearing to act in the affair. To overcome the scruples of her ladyship, he carefully blinded her by the well-known precepts of his Order. In the first place Mr. Dilworth had implanted in the heart of her ladyship a most profound conviction that he was a saintly man, and one who had no other purpose in this world but the glorification of God and his Church; that, as a natural consequence, resulted from her being a privileged penitent. Again, there is a sentiment which, in compliance with the first rule of his Order, he had carefully instilled into her mind—rigid adherence to her faith, and implicit OBEDIENCE to the rules of faith as interpreted by her spiritual adviser. The Catholics have no rule of faith beyond that given to them by their confessors: they believe the Commandments and the Bible, and generally have by heart the Douay Catechism; but for the *interpretation* of one and all of these they are indebted to their spiritual advisers: indeed, a very insignificant portion is delivered from the pulpit, and private instruction from the confessional is the main feature of their religious belief.

If a man doubts any portion of church discipline, or is unable to comprehend the fanatic intolerance of the Vatican, he does not peruse his Bible, nor yet his catechism, nor waits till some pulpit orator enlightens him; but he goes to confession and consults the priest, and whatever that priest says he believes to be the revealed word of God.

Thus Lady Redhaven doubted no more the action proposed to her by the Provincial, as being that which accorded with the law of her Creator, than she doubted the fact of his being the true and only lawful expounder of her religious faith. But again there yet existed a stronger hold upon her senses, than either the fact of his being a holy man ranking high in a holy order, or the interpreter of that by which she hoped one day to gain her salvation. Mr. Dilworth, pursuant to the well known principle, played upon her ladyship's devotion. Catholicism is a faith of mysteries, oftentimes incongruous, unmeaning mysteries; and with such a heap of mystic lore, it very naturally embraces a vast amount of superstition. Now the greatest superstition in that faith, and one that has the most wonderful hold upon even well educated people, is the belief in the interposition of saints in the affairs of mortals. It is unneces

sary here to describe what the belief in saints has led to in the palmy days of Catholic England, or the displays we occasionally receive from the Continent for the edification of the enlightened world, but here is an example of what it consists in among the well-informed, intellectual English Catholics.*

The Provincial had explained to her ladyship the fact of Mr. Copinstall's lucky attendance at the time of the carriage accident, and likewise the occurrence before the painting of the Madona, the peculiar light in which the face had appeared to the gaze of Lady Charlotte, and the effect such an exquisite expression had had upon the mind of the peer's heretic daughter. Such descriptions were not permitted to rest in the mind of her ladyship and receive her own interpretation, they were dilated upon until Lady Redhaven succumbed to the sophisticated reasoning of the Jesuit, and unfeignedly believed that it was a special mark from heaven of Lady Charlotte's speedily approaching conversion. Her devotion to the Virgin was not what is often represented as appertaining to en-

* The recent exposition of Catholic doctrine as to the miraculous interpositions of saints, by Dr. Newman, will doubtless recur to the reader as a confirmation of this.

lightened Catholics,—namely, blinded infatuated reliance upon her divine attributes; but it was a sentiment of the tenderest love—a feeling such as one mortal could bear towards another without positively becoming idolizing, as a child may feel towards a much loved parent, as a sister for a sainted sister; yet this devotion was capable of believing too that a feeling existed equally strong in the bosom of God for his Mother, and that her intercession was permitted to reveal itself in the ordinary affairs of man. Thus did that devotion ultimately deteriorate from the greatness of the Creator, and an image was raised next to His throne that eclipsed in its grandeur the Omnipotence that had originally created it. Honour became absorbed in devotion—great devotion—in a fond belief that the power wielded by God only was sometimes permitted His Mother to display. Lady Redhaven firmly believed this, not because her reason told her so, but because it had been implanted in her mind by the Provincial when she first became a convert, and as he had often asserted, because her own conversion had been wrought solely and wholly through the Virgin's powerful intercession! So the deep and consummate knowledge of the Provincial was enabled to turn that

which was all truth, honour, and sincerity into a blind decoy to entrap a proselyte to his faith,—to make her a machine for the enunciations of his falsehoods and deceptions. No consideration of the sacredness of the object he used deterred him; and an angel from heaven would have been as remorselessly applied to the same bad purpose, with this plea—that "the end sanctifies the means;" but the disciples of Loyola have long since discarded this maxim; and when the voice of conscience speaks, if it ever can speak from amidst its load of false sentiments, it is stifled with the word OBEDIENCE. Men are but fishes; Jesuits the fishermen who hook them for their prey and their sport.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE ORDER OF JESUS—ENGLAND CATHOLIC—COLONEL CHORLEY—FRAUD AND FORGERY—TERRIBLE PROCEEDINGS—THE PERVERTER OVERREACHES HIMSELF—FAILURE OF THE PLOT—PREVIOUS ENIGMAS EXPLAINED.

THE followers of Ignatius Loyola are stern and astute philosophers in training the currents of human nature, apt and wily scholars in converting its weaknesses to the establishment of their own power. The history of Jesuitism embraces a comprehensive share of the history of human weakness, as it exists in the cabinets of princes, in the mansions of the rich and great, at the fireside of mediocre rank, and the homely ambition of the cottage labourer; yet the history of the Order of Jesus has upon its pages the record of virtues which would shine brilliant in angels and in man, and constitute all that is noble and admirable in the eye of his fellow-creature; perseverance that

knows no cessation, ardour no diminution, intellectual labour no rest, and patient endurance no murmur; self wholly abandoned, and transfused into the interests of a vast body; individual ambition absorbed in the desire to promote the welfare of a sect, who only repay with cool looks and the awe of fear; wealth, station, and the varied and complex character of those aspirations which guide men to the accomplishment of great ends, destitute of all charm that does not tend toward the benefit of the Order. What men covet as an end deserving the toil of a lifetime—as a reward which repays every hardship and struggle—the Jesuit despises as a tool, as a bauble, with which to play upon the weaknesses of others. *He* is destitute of a thought, a hope, or an inclination, that is not allied to the interest of his Society. For this he sacrifices his will, his talents, his earthly happiness. Obtain that, and load him as you may with personal infamy, shame, and disgrace, it is no more pain than the blow of a feather. There exists an inward, an inexpressible joy, more powerful than the hopes of the martyr, which sustains him—the satisfaction of having proved a faithful and useful servant to his Order. As he used the good-will of his fellow-creatures only as a means to accomplish

this, so does he laugh at the burthen of their abhorrence when his art is discovered. As he despised it at the commencement of his career, so likewise does he contemn it at its conclusion. Truly there is no earthly punishment that man can award to the Jesuit; as his noble self-denial placed him beyond the pale of the world's imitation, so in his downfal do its censures fail to reach him. His is the application of the greatest truths of philosophy, the divinest precepts of holy religion, to a bad, a despotic, an unhallowed purpose; and while we look with wonder and admiration upon the practice of those great truths, humanity and Christianity revolts from the objects for which it is attained. For centuries have they withstood the revolutions of time, the annihilation of empires, the dethronement of kings, and the dismemberment of nations, all of which were once their own. Persecution, exile, the frustration of their best and most perfect schemes, the enmity of the Pope, the abhorrence of their co-religionists, the fierce hate of all Christendom; and, yet true to that indomitable spirit which bequeathed to them the guile of the serpent with the nature of the phœnix, they have outlived every emergency. If quelled for a time, the *virus* of their art soon spread among

the faithful, and, with patient vigilance, they arose again to prosperity and power; so their name is recorded upon every page in the world's history, their wonderful spirit developed in every feature, their foul crimes defacing every proud dynasty that has ruled over the nations of Europe.

The followers of Loyola have but one end and one object—the elevation of their Order into temporal power; and that power is the enslavement of the whole human race to one will and one mind. The work may be one like to that of the Danaides, but it is prosecuted with a spirit that never despairs, with a resolution no failure can deter; and it lingers on them as a curse which taunts their rapacious ambition, but mocks their efforts ever to acquire. When it thrives in Austria it is expelled France. When Italy is groaning under the weight of its awful oppression, Germany raises the cry of infidelity, and Portugal bids defiance for a time. England sleeps in the security of unchallenged power, and opens the portals of liberality and tolerance in the munificence of her mightiness: the opportunity is not lost, and the work prospers; but no fatal despotism locks the presses of public opinion—the viper is seen, and the nation aroused to expel it. So Jesuitism rises and

falls as the spirit of enlightenment advances or recedes in the policies of nations; and what it was when St. Ignatius first bequeathed it to his disciples, so it is now, and will be to the end of time—a fiend in the garb of an angel of light, that scatters the seeds of bigotry, ignorance, and mental degradation, among the children of men.

Mr. Dilworth was one of those Jesuits who held a strong belief that it was ordained England ere long should be restored to the bosom of St. Peter's representative on earth; that she would again become what the Roman Catholics are so fond of terming her, the "Island of Saints," a bright gem in the triple crowned tiara of the popedom. He speculated upon no imaginary grounds, nor those prophetic illusions disseminated by his ingenious class to extort the last pittance from an impoverished sect, towards building magnificent churches enriched with the expensive splendour of mediæval art; but, from the figured statistics of their progress, and the increasing dissensions in the Established Church: Mr. Dilworth argued—a house divided within itself cannot stand; but with the partial eye of a Catholic, he assumed that because division had occurred, it was absolutely necessary that in the final dissolution the fallen Church must have

recourse to the old religion. That was as he would have it, as he was labouring to make it; not that there was the least probability of its being so: still the religion showed a great increase, arising, in fact, from the free toleration of his tenets by a free nation, but which Mr. Dilworth (as his betters have likewise done) construed into an unmistakable tendency to the Popish faith. With this cheering prospect laid before him, the General of the Jesuits had urged Mr. Dilworth to great exertion, not to allow the golden opportunity to slip; but while the people calmly viewed the increasing influence of the Catholics, by some well-directed blows to stagger the wavering—by acquiring some influential names on the list of his conversions—to open an avenue to the many. The General knew that the great mass of the English people are (or were wont to be) led by the aristocracy and the rich; and for this purpose he had selected his present Provincial, inasmuch that Mr. Dilworth was a man who, long before the Jesuits had made any open appearance in the field, had, in the capacity of a tutor to a nobleman of high rank, been enabled to acquire a very tolerable correct opinion of the sentiments and religious character of the English nobility. To this task he had been urged

in no measured terms, but with the haughty command of a superior whom no successes will satisfy, nor any exertions please. Advice had been poured in upon him, and directions conveyed with a command that his obedience dared him to slight; so that where the astute Jesuit himself might have hesitated in adopting and following out his schemes, the importunities and orders of his General pressed him to throw chances upon chance itself. A sensible blow, an apparent and prominent conversion, was requisite to bring over the vast body of waverers among the Anglican dissentients; and that blow must be struck without delay, that conversion announced as speedily as possible. Any timidity or delicacy must not interfere in the immediate prosecution of the plan; the Provincial was to exert his finesse, and trust to the blessed Loyola for the rest. Such was the purport of Mr. Dilworth's last despatches from the General; and without further loss of time he pushed the matter to its catastrophe as rapidly as his ingenuity could devise, or circumstances would allow. In this first determination, Colonel Chorley found the reverend gentleman one afternoon, the same on which Mr. Copinstall dined at Rochdale House, when in the

course of his afternoon calls he happened to be in the vicinity of Manchester Square.

Amidst the gaities of fashionable life, and the frivolities of a guardsman's pleasures, Colonel Chorley had always experienced a sensibility to something approximating to religion. There are some people religious from worldly motives; others from the natural gloom which hangs like an incubus upon their mind, and which a dolorous religion well assimilates itself to; some few are religious from conscientious feelings; and others are so because it exists inately, and forms one of the natural endowments of their mind. It was this latter description of religion that young Chorley possessed. He had been gay; that is, had mixed with the pleasant companions of his profession, and made their amusements and dissipations his own: but when the intoxication of excitement had worn away, his mind not only revolted from the folly, but a small voice within whispered of defilement to a spirit that was created for higher purposes—of privileges discarded which hereafter would be recalled to swell the condemnation he had incurred. For the past two years this religious feeling had grown stronger; and, as is so often the case in the army (where spiritual destitution,

both for officers and men is one of the great sins of omission in the War Office), Chorley had preferred practising his religion privately. He had not made any show of it; such might have created a feeling at the mess towards him, repugnant to the mind and sensitive honour of any English gentleman and soldier. Religion, we regret to say, is, from a want of proper instruction, at a discount in the army: and so having by accident, through his intimacy with Lord Luton, become acquainted with the Benedictine and the Provincial, he had fallen a prey to their zeal for convert-making. He had listened to their inductions: arguments were not reserved for such as the Colonel; and the undefined air of mysterious beauty that they wove over the faith of Catholicism, the grand sublimity of her doctrines incomprehensive to bewilderment, seized upon his imagination. The religion which they painted to him was not the intolerant, self-sufficient edicts of Rome, nor the bigoted exclusiveness of Romanism wrapped in the pageantry of ceremonial display; but it more resembled the interior of some venerable Gothic structure, where each elaborate decoration, from the fretted roof to the ornate columns, gave forth a silent beauty, and the dusky light

admitted through the painted window, gave an air of antiquity to the whole. The wily priests were better pleased to beguile the imagination than to convince the mind. The Colonel did not seek the truth, and if his religious feelings rested with delight upon the new faith which appealed so strongly to the senses and found pleasure therein, surely they had no reason to extend the details of instruction. But the Colonel had stayed at the threshold, and no insinuation of either Copinstall or Dilworth could attain his adhesion; he tarried for another. He waited for Lady Charlotte Ongar; and so, until the period of his declaration of past affection and ruined hope in the gardens at Richmond, he had remained a waverer; and though secretly a Catholic, externally he remained a Protestant—if the religion of a soldier may be so dignified. But to return to Mr. Dilworth and his visitor upon the afternoon from which we diverged.

"It may be easy to speculate upon such questionable results, my dear Colonel," said the Jesuit, in reply to some put off answer of his visitor's in reference to a rub he had given him relative to his '*secession*,' "but you know the one thing needful;" and the Provincial smiled, meaningly.

"Precisely; but you forget, Doctor, my object."

"Why, I may guess it now, Colonel; but you have never hinted it to me before."

"Repeatedly, my dear sir."

"Never, Colonel Chorley, or I should have spoken more explicitly."

"Upon my word, you now speak precisely the reverse."

"I shall be delighted not to be obliged to remove that impression from your mind."

"Why so, Doctor."

"Because if I have, it may be necessary to cause pain."

"Mr. Dilworth, speak plain. I beg your pardon. You must excuse my impatience. In the army we are concise from the commander-in-chief down to the full private. You will forgive me."

"Aye, Frederick Chorley, as I hope to have to forgive worse offences of yours than that some day," replied the Provincial, with his placid, good-natured smile.

"Come; but what is it you mean? no more Jesui——" the Colonel cut short the word—"no more parables."

"As you will. Have I your permission to ask an important question?"

"Yes."

"Do you love Charlotte Ongar?"

"You know it. I have hinted it broadly to you often."

"As your future wife?"

"Exactly so."

"Then the fiend of the bottomless pit has been playing here," exclaimed the Provincial, throwing himself violently on the back of his chair, and gazing in abstraction.

"What the deuce is it you allude to?" enquired the Colonel, with a puzzled air. "I cannot see much mischief that can have been done, by the fact of a life-guardsman having fallen in love with a marquis's daughter, and that nobleman his guardian above all. 'The thing is neither rich nor rare,' Doctor, unless your rigid notions upon such matters diverge considerably from what practical experience might dictate."

"No, Colonel, it is not the fact of its being so; but—well—upon my word I am perplexed how to proceed after all my meditation on the subject, and it's seldom, I must confess, a Provincial of Jesuits is at a nonplus."

"You can have no difficulty in speaking the plain reason of your apparent astonishment," urged the Colonel.

"No, none in the least. It is not astonishment; but it's a great annoyance that such a thing should have occurred. However it is vain lamentation now; you must know all speedily, it is sinful to delay."

"What may all this mean?" said the Colonel, a dark frown gathering over his brow, beginning to take alarm at the Jesuit's passing reflections.

"Calm yourself, my son; I will explain all," he replied with a waive of the hand. "Did not the Marquis ever hint to you, Colonel," continued the Jesuit, looking hard at his companion, with a searching, enquiring glance. "Did not the Marquis ever intimate, however slightly, the secret of your parentage?"

"Ah! the very thing I have been most anxious concerning—puzzling my brain many an hour. No, never—that is to say he always told me, indeed never more than once, I was the son of an old friend who fell at Waterloo when I was but a a boy."

"Humph; did that satisfy you?"

"At the time, yes; but since I have entertained doubts, I know not why, especially the other day, when you recounted the life of the late Lord Ongar."

"For why particularly in that?"

"Because I imagined some faint recollection of the scenes you described crossed my memory."

"No; you are mistaken, Colonel; you bear a yet stronger affinity to the Marquis than you had under that circumstance even."

"What!—Impossible!—Never! Not his son, Doctor?" The Jesuit nodded assent. "God help me; this is a fearful assertion!" exclaimed the Colonel, burying his face in both hands, and passing one swiftly over his eyes, as though to shut out the picture of the future which rushed through his brain.

"It is too true, Colonel; but do not permit your mind to attach too much importance to that which you must now relinquish; only rejoice you have been saved from going further."

"What—what"—said the soldier, darting up erect in his chair with an impetuous vehemence—"what proof have you? God bless me, Dilworth, you would never make such an assertion without proof—good, substantial, indisputable evidence, that I—that I—" and his breath grew short and his speech agitated and rapid—"that I turn out to be an illegitimate son of an abominable lying Marquis."

"Hush!—hush!—hush!" said the Provincial. in a soothing voice. "Don't forget that you are a reasoning man, and that I am committing to your knowledge a secret that can be shared by no mortal creature but myself and yourself and him—the other exists not."

"But the disgrace, sir—the infamy—the ——"

"Stay, Colonel; listen to me. Why *talk* of that? *Think* of it, if you will. But as you are the same in the eyes of all men after having heard this as you were before it was ever communicated, why talk of what will never attach itself to you?"

"Aye, Doctor, that may do well for such as yourself, who are, in a measure, separated from all the world's ambition, its envy, and its malice; but there is an inward monitor, Dilworth, which rests here," striking his breast, "when such knowledge becomes a bitter, galling cancer to the pride of a soldier and of a gentleman. I was proud, and ever would have been proud, as the son of the brave man whose name I bear; but as the bastard of a marquis, living upon the sufferance of a great man's reproachful conscience, believe me, Dilworth, it is a worse than beggar's inheritance, and a life destitute of manly pride. Never again, while I live, can I ever mix as heretofore in the society of

well-born men. I am degraded and disgraced, and this great Marquis shall hear his son tell him so."

"That I am perfectly convinced you would never do. What I have told you I did from conscientious motives, and from the desire that you should not embroil yourself in an affection that could never be consummated."

"But the Marquis would surely never have placed me in such imminent danger had he known this. He could scarce have overlooked the probability ——"

"The Marquis, my dear Colonel, knew perfectly well you, as a man of honour, would never take undue advantage of his kindness; and if you did, the one word was sufficient."

"Well; but how came you familiar with this? How did you learn this accursed story?"

"I will tell you. When you expressed the intention of becoming a convert to our holy faith, I accidentally mentioned your name in writing to our holy father the General, bearing allusion to the circumstance. In a subsequent letter from him he enquired whether the Marquis of Rochdale had ever acknowledged you as his son. My astonishment was great, and I wrote to say that the holy father must labour under some delusion, you were

an officer in the household cavalry of Her Majesty. In further confirmation I received these attestations of an Englishwoman, named Levinge, who is residing in Rome with an English family, Lord V——'s: it was her who acted as your foster-mother; your real mother being an Italian lady, well known by my correspondent, with whom the Marquis, during his sojourn abroad, formed a *liaison.* She, poor woman, died shortly after your birth; and the secret would have remained with the Marquis alone, but for that wide spread knowledge of individuals, and their connexions, which our holy order is enabled by its regulations to acquire. Here are the attestations. You will perceive them made before men of unquestionable character. I would pledge my veracity on their correctness."

The Colonel musingly read over the papers placed before him. The facts set forth were precisely such as the Provincial had announced. They bore the signature of several dignitaries of the Church of Rome in the Eternal City; and, by way of a final confirmation, that of the English Consul. This seemed conclusive. There could be no question as to the validity of the documents, and the Colonel carefully folded them up.

"These documents," said he, with deep irony, "I shall retain, as constituting my claim to the *honourable* lineage from whence I spring."

The Jesuit looked disconcerted for the moment.

"I don't know," said he, "that I have any right to part with those papers, they were but entrusted to my charge. Will not copies suffice?"

"Nothing but the originals, Doctor. Tell the General of the Order I am greatly indebted to him for the discovery he made for me, and that I leave your house now to seek my new-found parent."

"That must not be, Colonel," asserted the Provincial, in a voice in which alarm was disguised under that of displeasure. "No. I have confided to you a secret for your own individual benefit, to save you from a future of misery; and you must not compromise my character as a clergyman to a here——, to a Protestant, merely for the gratification of telling your father you have discovered the secret of your birth, and of his folly. That I shall hope to receive your word never to do."

"I am not aware any harm could come of such a proceeding, it is not necessary for me to give my authority."

"No harm! no authority!" exclaimed the Jesuit, beginning to feel extremely uncomfortable at

the prospect of so speedy a *denouement.* "I tell you, Colonel, that you would be forced to give up authority: and with the ill feeling which always lays smouldering against my Order, such a tale would exasperate the peer to denounce us as interfering in his family secrets. You would ill repay the zeal of our Order for this service to you, by rousing the bilious prejudices of a heretic nation upon your benefactors."

"No," replied the officer. "No, I would be thought more generous. But, Dilworth, can you stake your solemn word upon the correctness of these documents and the tale they elucidate."

The Jesuit's face became flushed, and his eye lit with an anger not usual to him, as he gazed upon the Colonel without speaking.

"I beg your pardon, my dear friend," suddenly exclaimed the officer, seeing he wounded the feelings of a supposed friend. "I imply no doubt. No; I believe it perfectly correct; there is correlative evidence to support your assertion—my own observation. I pledge my word to keep the information secret. But to *one—her* I must explain everything to."

"And lay the honoured father open to the eternal contempt of the daughter. Will she thank

you for it, Colonel; for having broken the sacred idol of filial love, and scattered the bitter ashes of silent abhorrence over the home hitherto cherished and respected?"

"You are right," said the Colonel, shading his eyes in meditation; "but what am I to urge for leaving her? What excuse am I to plead for the injury such a sudden change has wrought in my conduct towards her?"

"There has been no direct *eclaircissement* of your feelings towards her?"

"No; but a tacit understanding, in my opinion quite equivalent to an open avowal of my sentiments."

"Well, act as your own manly heart thinks best; and rest assured if she is a girl of the mind I take her for, she will not fail to appreciate it. Depend upon it, Colonel, that nothing goes nearer a woman's heart than candour."

"There is one thing I will do, Dilworth, and that without further necessity for reflection," suddenly exclaimed the Colonel, rising from his seat to go.

"What is that?" enquired the Provincial.

"Retire from the Guards."

"Ah! and what else?" The Jesuit was in

strong hope the disappointment had taken the direction he wished it.

"Exchange to a regiment in India."

"Nonsense," replied the priest, his face falling a full inch. "Stay at home. Besides, remember the good work it has pleased the Almighty to commence in your soul."

"Oh think no more of that," said the Colonel nonchalantly, "I shall find India a change. Very likely my conversion was a mere delusion, at least it will serve to put its sincerity to the test."

"Speak not so, my son; the salvation of your soul is of more importance than the indulgence of your earthly inclinations."

"Aye, and remain at home to eat the bread of sufferance. Not so—not so, Doctor; you have mistaken your man," said the Colonel, extending his hand to the Jesuit: and with this they parted.

"Mistaken my man!" soliloquised the Jesuit, as the door closed upon his visitor. "Mistaken him, eh! Dash the fellow, he never means to fly off; but I don't know, these military fellows entertain such *outré* notions of what they call honour. Honour! what a ghastly bugbear! However if I win not both, the other is safe; aye, safe as though the walls of St. Francis enclosed her."

What the Colonel's feelings may have been when he reached the street it is difficult to define; but the whole character of the man had become changed. The life in which he had taken pride and found pleasure, frivolous as may be the habits of those who filled the envied position, is yet capable of affording a man all earthly happiness. This passed away: he could no longer rank himself with men pure in their descent, and bearing the pride of birth in their countenance, in their conversation, in every action of their lives. Chorley knew the feeling which would be engendered did his shame become known while among them; and he not unwisely resolved to remove himself from a sphere associated with happier thoughts—with the remembrance of an easy, pleasurable life. Then there was Lady Charlotte, who had become a leading star, that had hitherto shone bright and distinct in his future, but which now fell from its firmament for ever. As a sister he no longer dared to think of her; the nature of her love had become to him something too dear ever to undergo a transformation so complete; and though there had been no open avowal, he could not fail to observe the favour in which he stood in her eyes. With the perplexing indecision of in-

numerable schemes, which arose in his mind as to the best course to adopt—that strange tendency which the brain has, when suffering under some sudden disappointment, to pursue the thread of the life and the events which *might* have occurred but for this untoward incident, to paint the future as it would have been, to speculate on theories now finally dispelled, and to linger over the ruins of that which was, rather than by summoning resolution to the aid, command a plan for the future. In the midst of these shades of light and darkness, Chorley wandered towards Rochdale house.

Great and sudden shocks are, to many minds, not so overwhelming as they are uncontrollable. The faculties have been trained to flow in one channel, to study one harmonizing view, comprehend certain expected results, and hope for certain realizations, approaching or visible, on the horizon of futurity. When that intervenes which completely changes the customary view, the mind cannot reconcile itself to such unprepared demands upon its powers; but, abandoning the present for the past, it wanders amid a garden of imaginary contingencies, follows out the thread of its recent expectation, and awakes from the dream of their idealty, but

to recur to those connected with the present and weave them with the past. So the Colonel resumed the thread of his affection for Lady Charlotte. Had it not been proved she was his sister? So when he came to the end of that, he speculated on the possibility of its being incorrect, the measures to prove it so; but when the insurmountable difficulty of FACT stayed the unraveling of that thread likewise, he found himself at the Marquis's house, without any very precise idea for what he had come. He knocked, was admitted, and shown into the library as he desired. The Marquis entered, and the soldier still stared in a mental stupefaction at the bookshelves, undecided and unheeding.

"Well, Fred, what's occurred?" demanded the Marquis. "What or why for, my lad, that you could not walk up stairs? Nobody there but the girls and your friend Copinstall."

"My lord," replied the Colonel, with his hands behind his back, holding his hat, "I am desirous of selling out."

Now had the Colonel desired a straight waistcoat and a quiet cell in Bedlam, the peer would have felt less surprise than he did at such an unaccountable demand.

"Chorley, you are mad."

"I cannot flatter myself so much as to believe I am, my lord," replied the Colonel, becoming gradually aware that his mode of procedure was not perfectly agreeable to the character he bore. "But to be candid, I must either sell out or exchange without delay."

"God bless my heart, you have never been dining, man—eh? and got a little —— eh, eh?"

"No, sir; no, I am quite rational and sober."

"As to the latter you may be, but I question the former. Sit down and let me hear further about it."

"The fact is, my lord, that our regiment marches to-morrow to Windsor, and before leaving town I desired to express my wishes to you."

"Why? Tell me the wherefore, man," demanded the peer, with impatience.

"Owing to something which I have just learnt, that renders the step imperative."

"What is it, pray; a quarrel with your Colonel, or——?"

"No, sir; it is that which I am bound by the solemn vow of secrecy never to divulge." And the Colonel bent a fierce glance upon the rigid handsome countenance of the peer, but without

marking any effect his words had had towards discomposing his usually placid state.

The Marquis was at a loss to comprehend his young *protégé*, but at last came to the conclusion that he was labouring under the effect of some violent excitement. His whole demeanour evinced it.

"Well, you wish to exchange," he observed, after a few minutes thought. "I will think of it. Call again when you are next in town."

"But I am particularly anxious the matter should be arranged at once. Will you call at the Horse Guards for me, my lord?"

"I will see, I will see, boy. Now take my advice and go home to bed. You are looking feverish and excited; the best thing for a throbbing pulse, Fred, is a glass of water and a good night's rest."

The Colonel mechanically took his leave, and the peer returned to the drawing-room perplexed and annoyed.

CHAPTER IX.

LADY REDHAVEN'S APPEAL—THE VICTIM—THE PROVINCIAL'S POLICY—PENCHANTS OF A MODERN MONK—AN AWKWARD RENCONTRE—THE JESUIT'S AND BENEDICTINE'S QUARREL—MORALE OF THE CATHOLIC PRIESTHOOD—THE BENEDICTINE COUNTERPLOTS.

NEARLY three months had elapsed since the ducal *fête* at Richmond. The season was finally up; the squares slept in the dormant inanity of non-occupancy, and in the clubs only temporary sojourners yawned in the reading-rooms or studied "Bradshaw" and the "Continental Time-Table" over a melancholy *ragoût*. The shutters of Rochdale House were barred tyrannically against the hot glare of the autumn sun, as though the air of that period of the year would be greatly insulting to the fashionable furniture ensconsed in their holland covers. The blinds of No. ——, Manchester square, presented their dingy surface to the eye of the casual wayfarer, who, impressed with the

gloom, hastened his steps towards noisy Oxford street. Every morning the rap, rap of the limping old postman broke the dull echo of monotonous silence, and attracted the housemaids, who, from the attic windows, watched the scarlet coat, and gave vent to gentle reminiscences of the "six foot two" in the Guards exiled in Chichester.

The plate-glass windows in the ground-floor of the same No. ——, on one cloudless morning, were startled by the reflection of the identical red-coat discomposing the daguereotype representation of smoky green lilac leaves, and rusty brown railings that had reposed for weeks upon their grimy bosom. The rap, rap at the stiff-necked knocker sent the heart into the mouth of a tight-laced damsel, and made an inflated matron—who was luxuriating in a late breakfast, "down among the dead men," in her own little room—burn her mouth while in the act of sipping hot tea. "Gracious goodness! a letter," screamed the damsel, darting up the kitchen stairs. "I knows it's from my sweet little Jim" ("little Jim" was "an afternoon shadow of somebody else" in the Life Guards).

"Good morning, my dear," said the little, courteous man, with his wonted gaity, "fine morning—

Mrs. Ball—Rev. H. Dilworth—my dear," and away he trotted.

" Mrs. Ball and Rev. old Dilly be fiddled," exclaimed the damsel, half crying. " Its too bad of that Jim. I'll serve him out, as sure as my name's Betsy Blay. Wont I take up with Sam at the Dragon next Sunday; the howdaciousest, ungratefullest decepter, him."

Mrs. Ball having minutely inspected the postmarks and seals of both letters, proceeded to open her own. " Heaven a mercy! Betsy, lass; why the first-floor soot's a coming home by eleven this morning. Quick lass, quick, and get his rooms swept and dusted."

Betsy, brooding over her " decepter" lover and forthcoming revenge, proceeded to arrange the rooms; and as the church clock drawled out its last shrill note, a cab pulled up short at the door, and Mr. Dilworth walked staight to his rooms.

" Is this the only letter you have for me," he inquired of Betsy, who had dropped a profound curtesy to the " Rev. Dilly" on his arrival.

" Yes, sir, the *honly* one; and that came along with *yours* this morning. Mrs. Ball would be glad to know whether you will take breakfast, sir."

" The only one, eh? That's all right. Break-

fast, eh? Who can this be from; some fair penitent in distress?"

"Sir?" inquired the damsel, supposing the latter part referred to herself.

Mr. Dilworth, without heeding, broke the seal and perused the following:—

"Dear and Rev. Sir.

"I think that it would be more advisable to adopt the suggestion you intimated when we last met. My dear, sweet penitent is restless and unsettled in her mind, and requires the aid of one who understands so well to administer the consolations of our divine religion to the distracted heart. She seems struggling with an influence, which I, in my poor wisdom, cannot solve the cause of; and therefore I think the sooner you come to reassure her of the inestimable blessing it has been the Almighty's goodness, through the most Holy Virgin's intercession, to accord her, the better. I am not competent to direct so powerful a mind as Lady Charlotte's.

"Dear Mr. Copinstall is here on a visit; but in compliance with your desire, I have not sought his advice. I have procured you accommodation in the adjoining village, where you are quite safe from

all intrusion. Soliciting your prayers for me and mine,

"Believe me, &c.

"CONSTANCE REDHAVEN."

"Castle Crowle,
Tuesday morning."

"Will you take breakfast, sir," again demanded Betsy, tired of waiting.

"Breakfast? No; nonsense. Where is "Bradshaw"—quick, my child, quick. Here, take these keys, and supply my portmanteau with fresh necessaries. I leave town again directly for some weeks."

Mr. Dilworth left directions where his letters should be forwarded to, and having again disposed himself and baggage in the cab, drove rapidly to the station. The blinds again excluded sunlight from the first-floor of No. ——, and Mrs. Ball and Betsy relapsed into the even tenor of their abandoned and disconsolate fate.

The gleam of autumn sunshine, bright and glowing, poured the full blaze of its light upon a richly stained window in the western turrets of Castle Crowle. The luminary was sinking fast behind the high hills which stretched a barren moorland range far along the horizon. But the

last stream of his light, as it shone on the glittering lake, or gilded the deep dark foliage of the vast elms, stretching their shadows on the sward beneath, like giants sprawling in repose, seemed to centre its effulgence upon the sombre colours that filled the bay-mullioned windows in the western tower.

The window emitted light, or a gloomy resemblance thereto, into a small apartment which had once, in the olden time, been the private chapel of the stronghold. A small altar stood in the deep recess of the embayed window; its front covered with a rich cloth of gold and silver, with vine leaves and ears of wheat embroidered round the Catholic I.H.S., which was centred in a glorified circle. A painting of the Madona and Infant, obscured by the dust of ages, inclined over the altar, on which rested its sole ornament—a large ivory crucifix. In an old high-backed chair, placed exactly opposite this memento of the Redeemer, sat Lady Charlotte Ongar; her eyes reverted upon the stained glass window, a Catholic prayer-book resting upon her knee, and her head reclining upon her right hand. The attitude denoted abstractive contemplation, and the statue-like rigidness of her features—the fixed deter-

mined expression that beamed in her large, bright eyes, the thin compressed lips—proclaimed the mind kept under strong controul; the will that yielded submission to the heart, and that heart obedient to the impulse which swayed the soul. Lady Charlotte had feelings as warm and gentle as the most tender of her sex; but it formed her pride and ambition to disguise these, even from herself, and appear, as her exterior denoted, cold and impassable. Early in life she had reposed her entire affection in an old maiden lady, her aunt and namesake, whose austere and frigid demeanour had chilled, almost to repulsiveness, her unsophisticated and girlish love. But as she had grown older, and better able to comprehend that philosophy which stems the current of natural sympathies, and hides, under the phase of mental strength, all the unbridled inclinations of the passions, she had learnt to love and to reverence her aunt. There was something so absorbing in the cool, dignified self-possession of her relative, so benignant and sincere, yet unaffected and serious, that it captivated her mind and created the desire to acquire the same apparently happy composure. And when, as she reached womanhood, she found that, beneath the placid, unemotional calm, there existed the

bitter reflections, the burning regrets, of a cherished and impassioned devotion to a brother, who had been tortured till his demoniac wife had crushed him in the tomb,—the wreck of her own happiness in the treachery of the man in whom she had reposed her love; that these sorrows had never died, but raged with the turbulent, undying vitality of the volcano; her affection turned into an admiration and devotion, that, in its sympathizing ardour, drew a lasting bond between the niece and the aunt. That much-loved aunt had died in seclusion, apart from her adopted daughter; but though the dying injunctions were not permitted to be breathed in her ear, the spirit that fled the corpse of the silent sufferer seemed to have centred in the soul of her living representative.

The remembrance of that much-loved being had never passed away from the memory of Lady Charlotte. Amid the glitter of fashionable society, the fascinations of wealth and high rank, the flattery of the wise and witty, the adulations of the proud and great, the spirit of the aunt reigned paramount in the niece. She had admitted one, and only one, to see beyond the impenetrable veil which concealed the true nature of her mind. That privileged one was Frederick Chorley; and

the knowledge he obtained had gained for her the devotion of the open-hearted, generous soldier. Yet the extraordinary command she possessed over her feelings had almost left him in doubt as to the extent of her favour towards him; it had, however, been great, unshared with one selfish feeling, unparticipated by a more ambitious thought. Frederick Chorley ruled the lord of her future life, as the dead aunt claimed that which was passed. The reader has seen how that image had been torn from its pedestal, and the finger of fate seemed to point to the decree that had made desolate the heart of her who now reigned supreme. It came like a tornado; it swept pass, but the mind was disciplined and withstood the tempest; and Lady Charlotte was the same placid, calm, and angelic creature that she had ever been in the eyes of the world. But if so to the world, not so to her own heart. A strange power had been obtained over that strong mind, generally so impervious to all extraneous agencies; an influence existed there that no human mortal had before exerted; but that it had been exerted, and successfully so, was evident from the spot in which she now sits. But the powers of her mind were all resolute, and those which reigned, independent

of others, rebelled against the control placed over them. That struggle had lasted long, but the associations of the aunt coincided with the weaker feelings, and rendered the conquest easy, that nothing had otherwise accomplished.

As she sat gazing, or endeavouring to gaze, into the future, a slight tap came to the door. Admittance was granted.

"Am I disturbing you, dear," said the gentle tones of Lady Redhaven's voice.

"No, not in the least. I was only looking forward to the future."

"Ah, my sweet Charlotte," replied her ladyship, pressing the head of the contemplator to her bosom, "do not fret yourself with unnecessary anxiety; rest assured that the Almighty will provide for *your* future; he will accomplish his great work in all wisdom. O how I pray for you, and to our Blessed Lady, that she may succour the child of her adoption. But I forget my errand. Do you know our dear friend, Mr. Dilworth, has arrived at D——; he did not come to the Castle, you understand why. It is useless to give unnecessary anxiety to your dear father."

At the intelligence Lady Charlotte caught her

breath quick, and her countenance, despite her great controul, turned pallid.

"I do not know from what it arises, your ladyship," she said, pressing her hand. "I cannot fathom the cause; but I always feel a pang at my heart whenever the Provincial's name is mentioned. Yet," she added more cheerfully, "I require his aid; do I not? I shall be glad to see him—see him at once. I have much to say to him. Can you arrange our meeting in the western avenue this evening?"

"There is little doubt I can, my dear child, if you really wish it. I will send him word to be there at what——."

"There goes the first dressing bell. Say at seven. The moon is at her full; we shall find it light enough."

"Barely so; but you need not detain him long. I will dispatch my own maid. Adieu for the present." And with a smiling countenance her ladyship hurried to her own room.

True to the order the Provincial failed not to keep his religious assignation with his matchless and priceless convert; and, in company with Lady Redhaven (staying on a long visit at Castle Crowle; though the fact seems ominous of the meshes into

which *she*, likewise, had been entrapped by the Jesuit), they both discovered the worthy priest quietly pacing amid the gigantic elms and ancestral oaks, whose heiress he was striving to inveigle into the walls of a convent. The first recognition over, Lady Redhaven strolled to a little distance from her *protégé;* and Lady Charlotte proceeded to unburden her mind of the distracting thoughts which confused it. The Jesuit, since the last time we saw him scheming for the accomplishment of his design, had fulfilled his determination; he had made rapid progress. His victim was not only a Catholic; but they were then planning her *entré* into a convent, and the disclosure of her intentions to her father. There had been greater difficulties to contend with than the Provincial, in his most anxious moments, had ever dreamed of. He looked back now to what he had had—to what he could now see he had had—to fight against when he first entered upon his daring plot; and in doing so he trembled for the future. He had discovered the key which had unlocked every door of opposition from his path, but he dreaded that some unforseen impediment would arise in which the magic key might prove unavailing in its efficacy, and then deprivation of his hard-earned prize

would be attended with certain disgrace. He had mounted the precipice, and had gone so far that return was impracticable;—delay, destruction, his only chance accomplishing the rest—and, with the ablest astuteness of his Order, he put an uncompromising shoulder to the wheel. In some respects Mr. Dilworth had been forced, much against his inclinations, to make a great political error; but it was imperative, and he had done it to facilitate his ends—though regretting and half dreading the results—he had quarrelled with his coadjutor, the Reverend Benedict Copinstall. Now the Benedictine was one of those easy-taking men, who never make a labour of a pleasure. He made converts by insinuating the doctrines of Catholicism in the society he mixed with, and by having recourse to small manœuvres which could be effected without ever rebounding upon himself. Unlike the proficient Jesuit, who thought nothing worth having that was not gained by putting in force the potent machinery of his class, he watched and waited till the opportunity came, when the Jesuit made the opportunity. The Benedictine practised the conversion of sinners as an amateur, the Provincial as an art—and as a thoroughly proficient artist, as he assuredly was. When they had arrived

at that point described in our last chapter—the utterance of the fraud—the Benedictine saw the danger and solemnly protested against it. We may even allow that such a proceeding was wholly at variance with the integrity of the man, who, though he would insinuate a lie, dared not countenance a palpable fraud. An angry debate had ensued, in which both, equally formidable in argument, had failed to convince the other; and the Jesuit had at length declared his intention of interfering no further in the matter, but consented to leave it entirely to the Benedictine. With this assurance, though on no very friendly terms, they had parted; and Mr. Copinstall was firmly impressed he had the field entirely to himself. But this was a mere *ruse*, on the part of the Provincial, to get rid of so nervous a coadjutor as Copinstall; and since then he had played his own game under cover of Lady Redhaven, and so far with a success of which the Benedictine had no thoughts even in his wildest dreams.

The great secret of the Provincial's success had been the death-bed scene of the aunt, which the extensive means of acquiring information peculiar to the Jesuits had put him in possession. He had gleaned the story of Lady Charlotte's affection for

her deceased relative from Chorley; but he had not, when first framing the tale, any idea of the vast importance that would arise in his assuming the character of being the last spiritual consoler of the departed aunt. So great was Lady Charlotte's devotion to her deceased aunt, that the force of her example had proved the most powerful inducement to listen to the artfully contrived insinuations of the Jesuit, who declared her aunt had died in the bosom of the *true* faith, as had her long-lamented brother; and that in her dying injunctions she had expressed her wish that this might be made known to her niece.

For not having sooner performed his mission the Provincial was not at a loss to find a plausible excuse; and by the application of those well selected pictures of his faith, which he knew were best suited to the mind he had to deal with, he gained her adherence to the Catholic Church. Then came the next act of the comedy,—the beguilement to the cloister. The aunt again was brought to bear, and her hopes, made to express that in her dying moments she trusted the girl, who was to her as a daughter, would one day become a sainted nun. The ridicule of the world, too, which she must undergo from the fact of her conversion, the dis-

pleasure of her father, and the disunion it must create at home, were all brought to bear upon a mind that, however indifferent to the world, while knowing it could not find real cause to attack her, was sensibly alive to contempt or ridicule. Indeed the astuteness, the sophistry, and harsh wisdom brought forward by the Jesuit to bear upon his argument, were so well struck in, without ever being formally urged, that a reign of terror possessed the mind and imagination of his victim. For long did she resist the tempter; though, however, anxious to accept the faith of her aunt, she by no means felt the vocation of the cloister. Her freedom was her idol; and though her heart had been severed by fate from Chorley, she yet clung to some faint hopes that he might discover the obstacle to their happiness not altogether unsurmountable. The agony such conflicts created in a woman of such powerful faculties as Lady Charlotte, who can describe! Her indecision between two great conflicting passions, must have been a masterpiece of Jesuitical art to have produced, to have compounded. No sooner had she cleared the Charybdis than the stern Scylla loomed in ghastly misery in the future. The struggle ended in favour of the Provincial, who stung her pride with in-

sinuating her want of self-command over the temptations which the evil one threw in the way of her resolution, and in a measure allayed one regret by the assurance that Chorley intended to take holy orders.

"And now, my dear child," said the Provincial, at the conclusion of a long exordium to persevere in the good cause she had espoused, the certain sanctification of her soul, the last injunction of a dying aunt, whom she loved more than a mother, and many other equally consoling things to his penitent. "And now, my dear child, are you more satisfied, more determined to proceed?"

"Yes; I feel a greater decision, and thank you much for the trouble you have taken to see me, especially when your visits must be such stolen ones."

"That is no account, your ladyship, when we look to the salvation of an immortal soul."

"You are very charitable, my dear sir," sighed Lady Charlotte. "How was Frederick when you heard from him?"

"Progressing most favourably. I am delighted with the zeal he displays. He will become quite a light in the church, as another I know is likely to become a bright ornament."

"It had, perhaps, better we should become a St. Francis de Sales and a Madame de Chantel."

"God receives not half sacrifices, your ladyship," replied the Jesuit.

"You are right," answered the penitent determinedly.

Without pursuing further this dialogue, highly interesting to the Provincial and her ladyship, we must revert to another individual who had, or else imagined he had, a strong interest in the matter.

The Reverend Benedict Copinstall rejoiced in the periods of relaxation from professional labour with as much zest as does the indefatigable committee-man—that parliamentary beast of burden, the bustling barrister in Westminster, the neglected genius in Temple chambers, the literary slave at the conclusion of his last work. Mr. Copinstall's arena for fame and success lay in the midst of the London season; and in his estimation there was no more probability of making a convert out of that season, than there was of his being able to shoot game, or a publisher to accept a three volumed work under similar disadvantages. When the ministers had discussed the annual white-bait—Sontag warbled her last note —Mr. Copinstall whistled the ditty, "open to a

country engagement." To play billiards with the lord of the mansion, discuss politics, tithes, and foreign affairs after dinner, to smoke a cigar for the edification of the lord's fast sons, or narrate anecdotes and hold skeins of worsted to the ladies in their boudoir—any thing, in fact, but to make converts. Mr. Copinstall repudiated the shop *in toto* during the long vacation. The present quarters he had been enabled to secure for his ruralizing was the castle of his newly-formed acquaintance, the Marquis of Rochdale—that acquaintance which the temerity of the Provincial had proposed to jeopardize; and the longer the worthy Benedictine remained in this delightful elysium, the more did he inwardly rejoice that the Jesuit's *coup de tête* had been strangled in its infancy. The worthy monk, despite his ardour for the extension of Catholicism, had a sound appreciation for the good things of this world. He liked high living as he liked high company: and he appreciated claret from cob-webbed cellars, as his predelictions were unequivocally aristocratic. He belonged to an ancient Church, to an ancient profession, to an ancient Order; consequently why should he not love the society of an ancient name, an ancient castle, and ancient port? Why not, indeed?

Though living in the same abode as the fair convert he hoped one day to claim as his proselyte, Mr. Copinstall had not, since his visit to Castle Crowle, hinted at secession. He waited for the next season, and in the mean time abandoned himself to the most delicious state of corporal and mental enjoyment.

On the evening of Mr. Dilworth's interview with Lady Charlotte, under the auspices of Lady Redhaven, the Benedictine had, instead of repairing to the drawing-room, strolled forth from the dessert for the pious purpose of repeating his office. This it was his practice to perform before the dinner hour; but on this day, a well-contested game at billiards with the Marquis, had interfered with his punctuality. The loveliness of the night, the brilliancy of the harvest moon, and the enchantment of the view under the mingled light of twilight and moonlight, induced him to extend his perambulations beyond the terraces to the avenues below, to study the solemn sight of that venerable fortress of the feudal ages under the effect of the placid luminary, her mullioned windows reflecting its chaste beams, and the old towers bathed and chequered in the grey silvery tone of its lustre. Mr. Copinstall struck into the umbrageous shadow

of the forest trees, and murmuring his prayers, marked the trembling light upon the mossy walk below, as it shone through each opening of the mighty limbs above. Presently the sound of voices, speaking in a subdued tone, reached him. A momentary terror of superstition placed him behind the trunk of the nearest tree; but as he listened, he recognized one of the voices, and as he emerged from behind his shelter, he encountered Lady Charlotte and her spiritual guide.

"God bless me!" ejaculated Mr. Copinstall, as he confronted the Jesuit, "that cannot be Dilworth?"

"At your command, good brother," replied the Provincial, though greatly staggered at so unlucky a mishap, yet offering his hand to the Benedictine.

"I was not aware of your arrival," observed the reverend gentleman, slightly pressing his brother's fingers. "Your ladyship did not honor me so far."

"No, Mr. Copinstall. Mr. Dilworth is merely a temporary sojourner in this neighbourhood; as he passed through the village, he called to see me. We met him here."

"Who have we got here," said Lady Redhaven,

coming up at the moment. "Ah! my excellent father, you have met us just in time to see your friend. Come we will all repair to the house; the dew is falling heavy, and his lordship will think us lost. Mr. Copinstall, give me your arm."

Mr. Copinstall was too well bred to offer another observation, but was proceeding to escort Lady Redhaven home, when the Provincial excused himself from going further.

"Your ladyship," he said, addressing Lady Charlotte, "will admit of my excuses, because, as you are aware, time is precious to me at this moment. I have many important appointments to meet ere I reach Lancashire, and they prevent my having the pleasure to accept your proposal. Lady Redhaven," he continued, "plead for me."

Lady Redhaven did so, and Mr. Dilworth took his farewell of them.

"Stay one moment, Dilworth," exclaimed the Benedictine. "Will you proceed, ladies, and I will regain you in a minute."

"Mr. Dilworth," said the priest, in a husky voice, as he ran back to where the Jesuit stood—an angry and jealous passion taking possession of his soul—"Mr. Dilworth, what is the object of this singular visit?"

"Nothing, my dear sir, further than as I passed by, I thought to call and see what progress you made. I did not know you were here; but I highly approve your plan. It was well suggested. Go on and prosper. I can see your reward is not far distant. Adieu!"

"Stay, sir," again demanded Copinstall. I am too closely acquainted with your Order, to be put off with such a cock-and-bull story. You are interfering, sir. You are putting in force the plan you declared to me you had abandoned."

"And what if I am, Mr. Copinstall. Who, pray, sir, shall dare to gainsay what the Provincial of Jesuits thinks proper to do?"

"Who—who? why I will, you low-minded, insinuating serpent—slave of an Order that is the pest of Christendom, that carries in its every act the curse of God upon its slimy track."

"Hold, you wine-bibbling, fawning blasphemer," retorted the Jesuit, his face livid and ghastly, his whole frame trembling with suppressed rage at the unprovoked attack upon what he prized beyond life. "Do you dare to utter your jealous malignity against that your shallow, senseless brain cannot grasp. Dog of a monk, but for your cowl I would strike you to the earth."

"Insinuating liar, I know your nature, I see your artifice—a serpent in the grass that by hissing forth its abominations lets the servants of God know where it lies. I will frustrate you, I will drag the envenomed tooth from your head. Your Order shall be expelled,—thrown out from amidst a nation of Christians, and your black art sent to scheme away its subtlety upon heathens, as it ever was, as it ever will be. I dare you to disprove it."

"Benedict Copinstall," replied the Jesuit, in a low, calm, sarcastic tone, without any visible emotion, "you are a poor, narrow-minded, illiberal monk, who because you have not the talent to accomplish a great work, intervene the obstacles of your pitiable jealousy to frustrate the sacred aim of the holy father, my General. Do as you will, ruin the cause of God, of the Holy Virgin, and reap the consequences. See the life you shall have to repent in the cells of your monastery, think of the honour awaiting for you in Rome, reflect upon the delicious aspersions these vain votaries of Mammon shall attach to the name of Benedict Copinstall. Who accomplished it? Was it the Provincial of Jesuits? No; but the dastard monk, who eat the bread of the father that he might beguile the

daughter to a convent. Look to him who is the ostensible contaminator—the perverter of the rich heiress: yourself most reverend father of Benedictines, you apostate monk of a holy society. Now go and destroy the handwork of God, go and glut upon the fleshpots of Egypt, and eat and drink your eternal damnation."

With this fearful curse the Provincial turned away from the appalled priest, and disappeared in the thick shade of the avenue.

In whatever rank it may be in the various descriptions of the Catholic priesthood, or in whatever difference as to the minute shades of discipline that may originate party dissensions, the entirety of the class are combined and united upon one theme—a sensitive jealousy and dislike of the Jesuits. The great majority of the Roman Catholic priesthood are illiterate men: that though crammed with a certain degree of proficiency in classical lore, yet are, in refined knowledge, in the intimate acquaintance of human nature, supremely ignorant. Destitute of a polite education, unacquainted with the suavity and grace befitting the sphere of life, which the profession they hold is a passport to move in, they are not only unsuited to prepossess strangers of their character, but from the boorish, unpolished

manners they acquire, are absolutely repulsive in society, and frequently the disgrace of a drawing-room, even among their own co-religionists. We have repeatedly seen Catholic ladies put to the blush, and Catholic gentlemen looking hot and fairly chagrined, by the breach, not of etiquette but of common manners, on the part of their priestly guests. This too not as an exception, but as a rule in English Catholic society; and our Catholic readers will fully understand (probably by bitter experience) the truth of this assertion. The blame, we presume, rests in their tuition, where consigned to a college in boyhood they never emerge therefrom until ordained in manhood, and are sent into the world to preach, and learn the decencies of respectable society as they best may. To this rule the Jesuits stand forth a brilliant exception, and some likewise of other orders similar to that of our own Benedictine. In the elegancies of the boudoir they have been fully initiated, the felicities of dinner-table chat they have made a study, and are at home as much with the peer as with the peasant. This superiority, when added to that greater excellence in every other acquirement, renders the Jesuits the more popular, and places them in an elevation, in the estimation of

Catholics, far beyond their fellow-priests. For this very fair partiality they incur the jealousy of the seculars, and whenever the two meet collision is almost inevitable.

Mr. Copinstall, though upon different grounds, was sensibly alive to this feeling towards the Provincial; and now when he beheld the wily Jesuit covertly appropriating his own,—conducting without reference to him a case deemed individually his own—his lurking dislike blurted out in bitter reproach, as we have shown in the short interchange of sentiments between them. This undisguised spleen was not in any measure abated by the fact which the Provincial's last speech had explained—that while the Jesuit prosecuted his desperate schemes, while he would alone grasp the booty if successful, he, Mr. Copinstall, was the scapegoat, the only open criminal in the matter; and if a failure ensued, the individual on whom the wrath of society would descend. This stung him to the quick; and rather than become the dupe of a man so hateful as Dilworth, he internally swore exposure though ruin came of it. For the present he determined to defeat him upon his own ground, to countermine the schemes from his own gallery.

"Your ladyship," said Mr. Copinstall to Lady Charlotte, some days after this occurrence, "seems to have grown very partial to the antique chapel in the western tower."

Lady Charlotte lost her usual presence of mind at so unexpected an observation. "Really, Mr. Copinstall," she replied, blushing scarlet, "I scarcely know whether, if such were the case, you are justified in observing it."

"Not in the least, madam. Pardon my rudeness; but you must forgive our Order, should I express an interest in such a tendency."

"Very natural, to be sure; but, but——indeed I cannot, nor have I any wish to conceal from you, that there may be a change in my sentiments with reference to your creed."

"I only hope," replied the priest, with a half concealed sarcasm in his voice, "it may proceed from a pure conviction;" with which he took up the paper he had been reading just before, and crossed to the extreme end of the room to point something out to the Marquis. Lady Ongar tried her best to engage him again upon a topic, his allusion to which seemed so inexplicable, to carry with it such a deep warning. But the Benedictine avoided it as a snare.

With Lady Redhaven Mr. Copinstall exerted himself to a greater degree, but the cautious provisions of the Provincial had prepared her for these attacks; and, without attributing anything uncharitable to him, her ladyship was too much under the influence of her confessor to heed the deprecatory tone of Copinstall's addresses. Foiled here, and fearful of tampering with Lady Charlotte in the event she should, by the aid of the Provincial, see through his object, the Benedictine delivered himself up to his own enjoyment and awaited the result.

CHAPTER X.

THE SCHEME PROCEEDS—THE JESUIT'S INTERVIEW WITH THE FATHER—THE PERVERT A NUN.

At length the convoluted schemes of the Jesuit were ripe for an *eclaircissement;* and though his proselyte still occasionally wavered, it was chiefly from the apprehensions of the effect her intended immolation might have upon her father, than from any real fears as to the strength of her own resolutions. Colonel Chorley, she had been assured, was preparing for the Church. His retirement from the army had appeared in the Gazette, to the high displeasure of the Marquis. Mr. Dilworth had expressed his desire she would forbear writing to him, lest it might disturb his now quiet repose. The Marquis had received a letter from him, apprising him of his retirement, but nothing further;

and Mr. Copinstall had heard, without any apparent astonishment, of Lady Charlotte's conversion. A paragraph had appeared in a London paper, promising its readers, at no distant period, with a startling announcement of " Perversions to Rome in high life;" and another morning journal, whose word was better to be relied upon, gave an editorial assurance, that ere many months had passed, it would be enabled to give a fearful history of Jesuitical craft practised in the highest sphere of society. It was penned with such apparent assurance, that Mr. Dilworth felt uneasy as he perused it.

To Lady Redhaven was intrusted the onerous charge of first breaking the intelligence of his daughter's secession, to the peer. Her manner was so gentle, so sweet and impressive, that the success was greater than had been dared to hope. Indeed, the Marquis was a man fully sensible of the strong mental qualifications of the eldest child of his house; and having been accustomed always to act for herself, he found great disinclination now to thwart her expressed convictions. He knew that to drive a strong mind to resist authority, it might lead to something worse; so he yielded his consent, though the shock was not the

less severe. Mr. Copinstall, who had deemed it most prudent to withdraw before the expected eruption, was sent for, and the peer was highly pleased by the sound, sensible manner he expatiated upon the event; and not less agreeably surprised when he discovered his friend had had nothing to do in the conversion. This Mr. Copinstall plainly declared, and his assertion was borne out by Lady Redhaven and the proselyte herself. Such an instance of what the peer deemed honorable conduct, raised the Benedictine high in his estimation, and he was cordially pressed to prolong his stay. One individual, however, raised a voice that was not soon silenced, and that was Lady Flora, who had recently returned home; and it was marked as particularly strange, that she and Mr. Copinstall were inseparable companions. But upon a pressing invitation from Lady Charlotte, Lord Henry Luton consented to come down for a few weeks' pheasant shooting, and from that time Lady Flora was silent. The Benedictine and the Marquis held many solemn conferences over their claret (Lord Luton never sat very long after the ladies), and from their tenor it might have been supposed that the peer was discoursing with the rector of his parish, so little did they disagree as

to the fact of Lady Charlotte being under the influence of a religious delusion. To accomplish the final result, Mr. Dilworth went down to the Castle to have an interview with the Marquis.

His finest craft, most sophisticated reasoning, the astute distortion of every argument, he exerted, but ineffectually. The Marquis was inexorable; nothing would reconcile him to such a result; and the Jesuit could perceive, with bitter curses in his heart, that the denial had been well prompted by his adversary, the Benedictine.

"In the first place, Mr. Dilworth," concluded the Marquis, rising and approaching the bell, "could I have been aware of what was proceeding in the mind of my daughter, I should have taken the precaution to remove the *influences;* but, sir, I was kept by you, I presume, in ignorance. I make no invidious comparisons, but I can assure you that I am acquainted with a gentleman of your own profession, though of a different Order, I believe, who withheld, when every opportunity was given him, exerting an influence he felt was not compatible with my rank, and with his honor as a gentleman. I shall say no more, sir; you have my most unequivocal and irrevocable denial

of consent; further discussion is unnecessary. I must wish you a good morning."

"One moment," my lord, urged the Jesuit. "I must crave your attention to one last appeal."

"Pray make it as concise as possible, sir; my horses are waiting."

"I was desirous, my lord, in the event of my own exertions to win your assent proving unavailing, to solicit at least no opposition." The Marquis shook his head. "It was from one," continued the Jesuit, "who has some claims upon your favor. I mean, my lord, the long missing son of your brother, the late Lord Ongar, whom your lordship is pleased to recognize under the name of Colonel Chorley."

The Marquis heard this assertion patiently; but when he read in the Jesuit's eye the thorough conviction that he was cognizant with all, he sank pallid and speechless into his chair.

"And did Frederick Ongar," he enquired, after a few minutes' silence, "knowing me as his uncle, direct you to deliver me that message?"

"My lord, he did not," replied the Jesuit, staunchly, "but he commissioned me in his name, in the name your lordship was pleased he should know himself by, to pray your acquiescence."

"Sir," replied the nobleman, rising to his full height with all the dignity of his ancient lineage speaking in every feature, "you must go. Do as you will for the present with my daughter; she is in your hands."

The Marquis rang the bell and preceded the Provincial from the room.

An hour after the Jesuit's departure, in the same room, sat the peer in close communication with the Rev. Mr. Copinstall. The Benedictine was speaking earnestly and impressively, and the Marquis sat, his countenance depicting all the varied emotions of insulted rank and aspersed honor, impatiently listening. He held a small packet of time-worn, discoloured letters in his hand, to which, as he spoke, he pointed to different passages for the Benedictine's perusal. After some hours' deliberation they separated, and no further allusion was ever made to the nature of that discussion during the remainder of Mr. Copinstall's stay. The peer treated him with the same marked respect, and he continued still one of his constant companions at billiards, and his frequent opponent in after dinner politics; but nothing could indicate that the Marquis, despite the Jesuit's visit, had taken an abhorrence to the entire sect.

A month afterwards Mr. Dilworth again visited the Castle, this time to escort the sacrifice to the altar of immolation. Lady Charlotte, taking a tender farewell of her sister and father, bade adieu to the world to fulfil the injunctions of her aunt and the wishes of her lover, by entering upon her noviciate as a nun.

Impassable to the last she had received the cold embrace of her father, and stood proof against the entreaties and supplications of her childlike sister; and with scarce a sigh, certainly without a lingering look, she passed from the protection of her honoured parent, from the shelter of her ancestral roof tree, to seek happiness in a convent.

Lady Redhaven was honoured with a visit from the Provincial some few days after, and presented with the scapula as an honorary member of the most Blessed Order of the Company of Jesus.

In the secret confession, however, he discovered that all was not so well—that conscience had commenced to assume its still small voice, and that Lady Redhaven, pure and spotless as was her Catholic faith, began to doubt the veracity of the Provincial of Jesuits. He stayed it for the present, but it was with the conviction that her ladyship would never make a shining ornament to Jesuitism.

CHAPTER XI.

THE COMING RETRIBUTION—THE JESUIT'S TALE EXPLAINED—THE BENEDICTINE TURNS TRAITOR.

It was the beginning of March in the following year to that which had witnessed the immurement of the fascinating Lady Charlotte Ongar in a convent. There had been two calls made at the thick door of that convent to beg admission for an interview with the new postulant. One was a man in the prime of life, who had yet the appearance of weighty cares upon his brow. The other, whose visit made but a day or two ago, was an aged man with a stern, commanding countenance. The former had been summarily dismissed by the Lady Abbess; the other had been ushered into the visitors' room, on one side of which high iron bars ran from the floor to the ceiling, partitioning off a

narrow space. Planting himself opposite this, the aged nobleman had questioned the dark bundle of black cloth that had rolled itself in through a private door and placed itself behind the bars. It might be a bear, or a tigress, it was so well caged; perchance it was, with a woman's voice calling itself Lady Abbess. The peer demanded the restitution of his daughter, which was denied him. The Abbess had no power; she was under a vow of obedience to allow no postulant to depart without the sanction of a yet higher authority. The peer then asked an interview. No, that must not be; her obedience prohibited the possibility. Then, swayed by his overpowering passion, he had raved like one distracted; had grasped the stalwart bars and made the ceiling tremble in his endeavour to uproot them. The dark bundle had fled; but not before the peer had shouted to her—"I will make you acquainted with a power yet higher than you wot of, before which iron bars and convent doors shall fall prostrate."

It was the commencement of March, and London was stepping forth from the shroud of dull monotony that had wrapped her parks and squares in a listless repose. The season, which was at its full height when we commenced our narrative, was

again entering, with newly awakened life, upon its brilliant career. Parliament was sitting in full muster; the opera had displayed its second *prima donna* of the season; carriages flitted through the dusty streets, and the fashionable loungers wandered through the malls, and basked in the sunshine in the recesses of club windows. There was a sign of busy preparation in Belgravia; tall ladders reared themselves against the proud mansions, and diminutive painters hung suspended in awful attitudes. Rochdale House was undergoing the painful process of being excoriated, and receiving again wholesome white paint, to reflect savagely upon the dismal abode of a poverty-striken countess next door.

At three o'clock, one Friday afternoon, a travelling chariot-and-four pulled short at the newly decorating house, and the Marquis, unaccompanied, stepped into the hall, and from thence to his library. Shortly after a tall, contemptuous, keen, pugnacious-looking gentleman, of age apocryphal, gave a pettish knock, and, with great respect from the Cerberus, was ushered into the peer's presence. Another less formidable looking individual again plied the knocker; and the genus of the leather chair, with a familiar grin, consigned the Rev.

Mr. Copinstall to the care of the footman. Again, to a bullying rat, tat, poor Cerberus hastes to the door; and Colonel Chorley, leaning on the arm of Viscount Lenham, swept past, unmindful of the usual delay.

"Frederick, Frederick, my brave nephew, how glad I am to acknowledge you as such," exclaimed the Marquis, as the Colonel entered. "I have explained by letter, as well as I could, how the disguise was demanded of me. You do not blame me, I trust, for acceeding to her wishes? But see, my secretary has the letters arranged for you, oblige me by their perusal while I arrange matters with our kind advocate here, Lord Bungay."

"Stay; Lord Bungay," said the Colonel, offering that nobleman his hand. "I cannot express one half I feel for this generous offer of yours: believe me you have a soldier's best and warmest thanks, and his fervent prayers for your success."

"Success!" reiterated the peer, Lord Bungay. "For by ——, sir! you must have a devilish queer opinion of my influence in the House, or capacities of expressing myself, if you talk of success. Success, my young friend, when did you ever know Charles Bungay *unsuccessful* pray? Ha! ha! we have them safe—safe—safe."

Chorley smiled at his own want of confidence; and, laughing, went to the table where a pale gentleman sat writing down certain particulars with a rapid hand.

"Here, sir, are the letters my lord wishes you to peruse, they are arranged in their proper dates. The ink somewhat pale, but the hand wonderfully distinct for her age, sir."

Without following the Colonel—or, as we may now call him, Lord Ongar—through the mass of correspondence, we will sum up the particulars in a few sentences.

The letters were those of the late Lady Charlotte Ongar written to her brother, the Marquis, at the later period of her life, those of the most recent date having been indited when abroad. They all bore exclusive reference to her nephew, the sole child of her brother, and to her favourite niece, Lady Charlotte. Upon the recovery of the youthful Lord Ongar, who had been secretly delivered from some poor people into whose hands he had been entrusted, the worthy aunt began to provide for his future career in life; and to guard against all dangers she foresaw must occur when her own protecting hand lay mouldering in the grave. She could discern the probable results of his intimacy

in the Marquis's family, and that in all human probability his future wife would be one of his cousins. She doubted not which the son of her favourite brother would choose. But her ladyship had a great dread of either making a choice merely from the force of circumstances, she desired that love, if it ever did arise, should be founded upon a genuine, unconstrained love for each other. With the Marquis's consent she directed his real birth should be kept secret from all, even from himself; that he should be taught to believe the Marquis only as his guardian; that he should work his way in the army, as the son of a veteran officer; and that his dependency upon Lord Rochdale would naturally bring her two favourites together. Later in life her ladyship's letters expressed the happiness she experienced in finding her hopes realized, and that a partiality had already possessed her niece's mind, then only emerging into womanhood, for her unknown cousin.

The worthy woman died while abroad, with nobody but her maid near her; who, taking advantage of the circumstance, had pillaged her deceased mistress and decamped. Thus no clue had ever been found to her final wishes with regard to the then Colonel Chorley. Her property, which was

very large, was divided equally between the nephew and niece. The former in the Marquis's name, that nothing could be divulged from her will.

In the meanwhile the officer of Guards advanced to manhood, yet without any *eclaircissement* of his affection for the Lady Charlotte. The Marquis, true to his word, threw them as much together as possible, but became concerned as to the reason which held the Colonel back, and doubtful whether the mystery so well intended by his sister should not be revealed.

At length the Colonel's summary resignation of the service determined the Marquis to defer it, until he had more fully ascertained how matters stood between the nephew and his daughter. Lady Charlotte's nature prevented his gaining ought from her; and to his repeated desires to the Colonel to come to him at his castle he had always received evasive replies. When Lady Charlotte became a Catholic he, through the aid of Mr. Copinstall, learned it arose from the Colonel's example; but when Mr. Dilworth demanded his consent for her becoming a nun, he then resolved to explain all. But the implied threat held out by the Jesuit had, as he supposed, but from a different motive, changed the Marquis's plan.

The conference with Mr. Copinstall had explained everything, for the Benedictine, either ashamed of being mixed up in so disgraceful an intrigue, or out of malice to the Jesuit, revealed all and gained the Marquis's consent to await the catastrophe.

After Lady Charlotte had been immured in the convent he had written to the Colonel explaining his real position, but commanding him not to see the Provincial as he was preparing his disgrace. He had visited the convent to confirm the Benedictine's assertions of the Jesuit's intentions, and then written to a friendly peer proposing a plan of extricating her, and at the same time heaping ruin on her perverter.

The letters having been perused by Lord Ongar, and by mutual explanations the above elucidation obtained; the Jesuit's plan fully exposed to the horror of all but Mr. Copinstall, who affected it, Lord Bungay held a private conversation with the secretary, and received a large sheet which they went over together, the noble lord pencilling particular parts, it may be presumed, for more easy reference. Lord Ongar delivered up the Provincial's papers, in which it was affirmed he was the

natural son of the Marquis, and shortly after the little cabinet broke up.

"We shall all be in the House, my lord," said Ongar to Lord Bungay, "and shall expect no mercy shown this rascal. Jove! that I had him at the triangles under the lash of my late farrier."

"My dear young lord," said the veritable Bungay, with a compassionate air, "had you given an occasional glance in the course of your existence to the proceedings of the Upper House, instead of occupying your mind exclusively with military frivolities—which nevertheless, by Jove, you fellows make serious enough when a rich belle stands in the way;—instead of foppery, you had studied legislative eloquence, you would have known that there was a man who never spared, nor feared, nor was debarred the exposure of vice—*vice!* my lord, whenever it came under his observation. In this instance I am the *preux chevalier* of your fair and ill-used cousin. May I ask whether Charles Bungay was ever known to undertake coldly the vindication of the lovely fair?"

There was no question but that the noble peer would have fallen in the lists of legislative disputation rather than have seen a fair lady of rank minus a footstool. So they all passed out in high spirits of the coming event.

CHAPTER XII.

THE RETRIBUTION—THE PERVERTER EXPELLED—CONCLUSION.

THERE was a very fair attendance of peers in the Lords at an early hour that afternoon. Rumour, with her hundred tongues, had dispersed an undefined expectation through the Carlton, and from thence to the minor abodes of political gossip, that something was coming off in the chamber of the hereditary legislators. The impression was not dispelled as the members sauntered into their respective seats, and observed Lord Bungay perched in his habitual exalted corner, busy in conning over a large sheet of foolscap. The elder peers nodded to each other, and gave a knowing glance in the direction of the throne, with a certain meaning smile which expressed conviction of forth-

coming pleasure. Younger representatives of family honours chatted in small knots, and asked each other what bone old Bungay was going to wrangle about. Some visitors at the bar seemed to be equally desirous of having the mystery solved, but there were two or three individuals in the gallery, who chatted in an under tone, as though already aware of the subject-matter to be expounded to the wise men of St Stephen's.

The Chancellor took his seat, and preliminary business was gone through without exciting the attention of the abstractive Lord Bungay. A noble lord then rose to move for certain papers relative to the importation of hob nails into the islands of the South Pacific, and began an elaborate expatiation upon the evil effects thereof. When up sprung Lord Bungay, as though suddenly pricked with a needle, and declared he rose to order. His noble friend was wholly out of order; he was always out of order; he had made a motion and then entered into a debate. The noble lord explained. Lord Bungay could not permit their lordship's time to be fritted away by irregular proceedings, such as the noble lord had adopted. And after having cracked a villanous pun at the expense of his "noble friend," the subject dropped.

With some preliminary hems and coughs, Lord Bungay again rose to present a petition which had been entrusted to him, he said, by an illustrious member of their lordship's house. The petitioner was no other than his noble friend the most noble the Marquis of Rochdale. This announcement produced a momentary sensation, and again all was hushed as the grave. Lord Bungay proceeded to read the petition, which was a detailed account of the Lady Charlotte Ongar's conversion, and entrance into a convent and the forcible detention of her there, with the refusal on the part of the Lady Abbess to permit her noble father to see her, or any correspondence to pass between them. The petition did not enter into any account of the Jesuit's proceedings; but having finished it the noble lord was just entering into an eloquent detail, when the noble lord who moved about hob nails rose to order. He declared his noble friend was completely out of order, in presenting a petition and then entering upon a subject foreign to the spirit of that petition. Lord Bungay declared he was quite in order: but his noble friend persisted he was not, and made some half-audible allusion to "consistency on the part of the noble lord."

"Consistency!" shouted Lord Bungay, "does

the noble lord mean to imply my want of consistency. I beg leave to assure him, that consistency is inseparable from the political opinions I have ever advocated in this house, and that I will permit no noble lord to charge me with what is wholly antipathetical to my avowed political principles. (Hear, hear.) The noble lord is mistaken in his comprehension of the rules of consistency, and the pliancy requisite for measures of pressing expediency." (Hear, hear, and a laugh.)

The noble lord then sat down, undoubtedly quite mystified as to the interpretation appropriate for the word "consistency" in a political point of view. The noble lord with his petition was then allowed to proceed without further interruption.

Truly Lord Bungay had made no idle boast to his young friend that he would argue the case as became an old debater, and a *preux chevalier* of the gentle fair. No point was lost sight of, from the time of the Provincial's first introduction to Lady Charlotte in the saloons of an illustrious duke of their lordship's house, up to the period of her final lodgment in the walls of the convent. The artifice played upon her cousin, the forgery by which it was pawned upon his credence, the gross insult offered to the noble petitioner in his

own castle, and every other petty trick which could be construed into a means to an end, or throw oblique upon the Jesuit, were resorted to and displayed with all the powers of oratorical fancy. Never had Jesuitism encountered a more bitter opponent and more philosophical reviler than in the deep sarcasm and eloquent denunciations of Lord Bungay. The effect produced was a vivid and startling picture of craft, avarice, and vaulting ambition; and the serpent that had played upon the unconscious vitality of English Protestantism for a life-time, stood revealed before them an astute, knavish Jesuit. Lord Bungay concluded in a well-drawn peroration, and moved that the Reverend Hydra Dilworth, O.J., be summoned to the bar of their lordships' house. The motion was carried *nem. con.*, and, after a feeble apology for the conduct of the misguided Jesuit, on the part of the Earl of Redhaven, the house adjourned.

There was a gloomy fog hung over London on the morning subsequent to the evening of Lord Bungay's petition to the Lords, as though the heavens above shielded their face from the revelation of such perfidy and religious mockery; yet a busy activity was visible in the club-rooms and the City, as men devoured the leading article of the

paper that some months before had warned its readers. They had carried out the prophecy in a spirit that never speaks in earnest but it carries conviction; and the readers scowled fiercely as they read the second denunciation of the Jesuit's craft. Soon the news spread, and the passengers in the city streets stayed to say, "Have you seen the paper? Awful show up of the Pope and Jesuits."

The newsvender's boxes were besieged by porters and city clerks, and an occasional slinking figure with a Roman collar. "Paper, sir. No, sir. Expect the third edition, sir, every moment. Here is the evening paper, fourth edition, with Lord Bungay's speech. Take it, sir? Fivepence. Thank you." So ran the gabble in the City; but in Manchester square it was different. Mr. Dilworth had arrived in town late the previous evening; and, wholly unconscious of the evil over his head, took the paper from his breakfast table to cut and air before the fire. As he watched it smoke, his eye indistinctly caught his own name. He read the leader, then the speech; and, with a face pallid as death, a hand shaking like an aspen, and his brain as a tornado of conflicting passions—

hatred, foiled ambition, and bitter revenge—he sat down to pen the following lines:—

†
I.H.S.

"Madam,

"I forward you the day's paper, in which you will perceive the heretics have triumphed for a while over the Church of Christ and the cause of the Blessed Loyola. Have the daughter of the heretic peer sent immediately to her father's house in London. When you next write address to me in Rome.

"Your brother in Christ,

"H. DILWORTH, P.O.J.

"To the Superior
of the Convent of the Visitation,
————,
Gloucestershire."

Having concluded this, he rang the bell and ordered his account with Mrs. Ball; and when the officer of the Lords called in Manchester square, Mr. Dilworth was steaming towards Civita Vecchio.

"The dog has made his escape to Rome," said the Marquis, entering his drawing-room, where a circle of the most intimate friends of the family were congregated round the happy Lady Charlotte.

"Never," cried Lord Henry Luton. "Then I

am foiled in my revenge. Confusion seize the lying old rascal; he has" (here sinking his voice so low that only a few could hear him) "ruined me with Flora."

"Better chance for Lenham, then," said Lord Ongar.

"Ah, brother Fred, you are in the right box yourself, so you care little now for the cajoleries that Jesuitical rogue has played elsewhere."

"Well, we must allow he spoke the truth once in his life," said Lord Ongar.

"When," demanded Lord Luton.

"When he gave us the history of the fawn-colored satin."

"Yes, by Jove," replied his lordship, with a twinge, as he detected Lady Charlotte smiling, "but that does not recompense me for the loss of my lady fair."

"Mr. Copinstall," said Lady Charlotte to that worthy gentleman, who was being congratulated upon the liberality of mind he had displayed in the affair, "I would say a word with you."

"At your command, Lady Charlotte," he replied with alacrity, following her to that window recess where they had once before held conversation together.

"Do you remember the nature of our consultation here one evening last summer?"

Mr. Copinstall became red as scarlet, and despite his endeavours, the merry grey eyes became filled with tears.

"Your ladyship must be merciful, and place my late endeavours against the folly of wishes long since dispelled."

"Do not fear me. I am grateful for the aid you have rendered. But this small parcel—take it and send it to Rome; there are a few lines inside, that perhaps may touch the hard heart of that clever, worthless man, together with his miniature, that he vainly hoped would aid him towards my immolation. And from this time forth remember we are sworn friends, upon one condition, that is, you never breathe the name of your faith in my ears."

Mr. Copinstall took the hand offered him and carried it to his lips; nor have we any reason to think he ever broke his word.

Some two years afterwards, when summoned by the head of his Order to appear in Rome, it seems he threw off the authority and dropped the reverend, and might be seen in the autumn months playing billiards with the Marquis; in the summer

toiling at his desk in writing books against Jesuitism.

"And now, my lord," said Viscount Lenham, "what scheme are we to adopt to punish the household traitor?"

"Demand him of the Papal Court through the Foreign Office," said Lord Luton.

"Leave him to the misery of his disgrace and expulsion," said Lord Ongar.

"You are right, Frederick," replied the peer. "His own conscience will be our best avenger, and now let us dismiss for the future the memory of the disarmed PERVERTER."

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